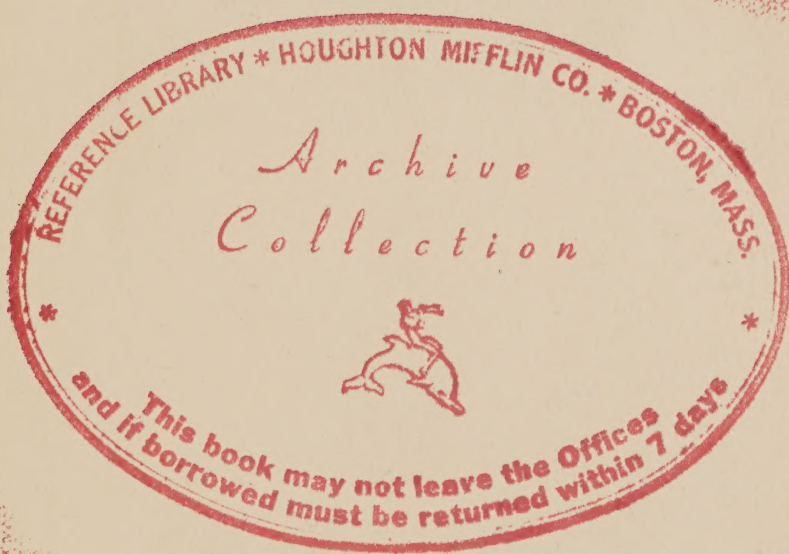


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LETTERS ON THE  
AMERICAN REVOLUTION

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# LETTERS ON THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

1774-1776

EDITED BY  
MARGARET WHEELER WILLARD

WITH MAPS



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## PREFACE

CHANCE threw into my way a file of *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* for the year 1775, which contained a number of letters from America. These letters and a number gathered from the *Bristol Gazette* were intended to form a brief collection of what appeared to be a source of information concerning the American Revolution little used by either American or English historians. However, on consulting the files of London newspapers of the same period, I found so many more letters of a similar character that this volume is the result; in fact it is a selection from a much larger number which I gathered from these sources.

In the preparation of the collection I have received generous assistance from a number of persons. To Mr. J. Franklin Jameson my thanks are due for encouragement and advice from the start. I acknowledge with gratitude the unfailing courtesy and helpfulness of the staff of the Central Library in Bristol and of the newspaper room in the British Museum. To Mr. J. Appleton Wilson of the Maryland Historical Society, Mr. Thomas L. Montgomery of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Mr. W. E. Stanart of the Virginia Historical Society Miss Louise M. Taylor of the Essex Institute, and Mr. Albert E. Bates of the Connecticut Historical Society I am indebted for assistance in identifying individuals and for points in local history. I must record my very special thanks to Mr. George P. Anderson of Boston for interest and help in tracing obscure references. Professor Colin B.

Goodykoontz, with his wide knowledge of the field, has helped me through a number of difficulties. Finally I owe a deep debt of gratitude to my husband, who first brought the letters to my attention and pointed out their historical worth, and who throughout the preparation of the volume has helped me with advice and in the tedious work of checking and revising.

MARGARET WHEELER WILLARD



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## INTRODUCTION

AN Englishman living during the years immediately preceding the opening of the American Revolution had little cause to complain of the inactivity of the press in supplying him with news concerning what was taking place in the discontented colonies. The distance between the mother country and the colonies was great. The journey across the Atlantic required, in fine weather with favorable winds, approximately four weeks, but in the wild winter weather three months were often consumed in the voyage. One letter records "a long and tedious passage of fifteen weeks, bad weather all the way." No special agencies for collecting news and sending it direct to the newspapers had yet been developed. But the journalists of the day were enterprising, and in many cases collected a considerable amount of news, though it was of necessity printed weeks or even months after the event. The chief sources of information as to conditions and sentiments in America that were accessible to English journalists were the newspapers of the larger cities in the colonies. The *Massachusetts Gazette*, the *Virginia Gazette*, the *New York Gazette*, the *Essex Gazette* (Salem), the *New York Journal*, and the *Philadelphia Journal* were frequently quoted in contemporary English newspapers; but the searcher after news might supplement these by interviews with travellers recently returned or with captains of ships sailing back and forth across the Atlantic, or more frequently by letters from those far-away set-

tlements of men of English blood. It was to supply the want of direct and special correspondents that so large a number of personal letters found their way into the columns of the newspapers. As these were not written to the papers, but to friends in England, they appeared in published form as they appear in this collection, without signature or with only the initials signed, and it is now impossible to identify the writers. Eighteenth-century England was, however, not unused to this practice and anonymous letters would arouse no comment.

In gathering the letters for this volume the Burney Collection of London newspapers for this period in the British Museum has been searched, as have also the files of *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* and of the *Bristol Gazette* in the Central Library in Bristol. A few of the letters were printed in more than one paper. It sometimes happened that such letters were abbreviated by one editor and published in full by another. Most of them, however, appeared in but one paper, to whose editor they were evidently handed by their recipients. Of the papers searched *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, the *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, and the *London Chronicle* gave most space to American news, and a large number of the letters of this collection were taken from their columns. *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle* surpassed the others in the vigor of its opposition to the measures adopted by the Ministry in dealing with the colonies. In its columns American news was often printed in large type, and open letters dealt constantly with colonial affairs. The fact that so much adverse criticism of government



measures found acceptance in the newspapers of the day argues a large reading public sympathetic with the American cause, or at any rate antagonistic to the policy being pursued by the Government.

The writers of the letters included in this collection were colonists or Englishmen temporarily sojourning in America. Their correspondents were friends or relatives in England. Among the colonials were patriots, loyalists, waverers between the two, and a few impartial observers of both sides; among the British were some who were openly antagonistic to the home government, some critical, and some intensely loyal. The British letter-writers were officers and soldiers, stationed most often in Boston, and an occasional traveller. The colonial writers were, on the other hand, more widely scattered. The greater number of them, to be sure, lived in New England, but others lived in the middle colonies, and still others in the south. Some wrote from the cities and larger towns, but others wrote from villages. There are therefore set forth in the letters the various shades and gradations of opinion and sentiment prevalent in the colonies. The writers discussed conditions in America at first freely, but as time went on more guardedly.

The period chosen for the limits of this volume, from the first Continental Congress to the taking of New York by the British, was determined by the fact that during these years there was the freest expression of opinion on all sides. The development of the activities of the committees of safety in the various colonies during the year 1775 put a distinct check upon the expression of Tory or loyalist sentiments. These committees took upon themselves the right to search

the mails before they were carried on board ships bound for England, and loyalist letters thus found might be used as evidence in the trials of those so-called traitors to the colonial cause. Consequently, by 1776 it was only when a loyalist felt sure of a safe and secret conveyance to England that he dared put into words his antagonism toward what he considered colonial aggression, or his bitterness and disappointment at the failure of the mother country to furnish adequate protection to the loyal colonists. From Boston alone, which was in the hands of the British, could comment on conditions and events go freely from Tory and soldier without fear of consequences. On the other hand, with the Declaration of Independence and the open break with the mother country, it became increasingly difficult for patriots to present their cause in England. Commercial relations between the two countries ceased. The bundles of intercepted letters still kept in the Public Record Office in London testify to the fate of many of those written by patriotic colonials. Because of these conditions the accounts of happenings in America which reached England after the summer of 1776 were more one-sided and consequently less interesting.

The main value of the letters lies in the fact that they were written in so many cases shortly after the events described had taken place, by men who had themselves experienced the things of which they tell, while impressions were still vivid and feelings still running high. Rarely were they written with any thought that they would ultimately be made public. Like most first-hand accounts they vary with the individual. The descriptions of the battles of Lexing-

ton and Concord show very clearly how men who see and experience the same things view them with partisan eyes and react to them differently. Some of the anecdotes related in the letters are no doubt fabrications, the rumors, reports, and exaggerations that are current in times of stress and emotion and that play a very definite part in the formation of public opinion. The danger of accepting such statements without careful corroboration is obvious. No attempt has been made to check up all misstatements in this volume. Notes have been added only when they were needed for the elucidation of the narrative or the identification of individuals. In many cases of allusions to persons it has been impossible to identify them even when the family names are given, for the clues are insufficient to distinguish them from other persons of the same name. Little dependence can be placed in the statements as to numbers; they are variously reported according to the information of the writer and the purpose he has in mind in citing them. If, however, the letters furnish little definitely new in the matter of facts concerning the Revolution, they still have a value in their cumulative effect, as recreating the atmosphere in which revolutionary ideas grew. They represent the public opinion of the time in process of formation.

In the letters from colonials the fact is brought out clearly that there was no unanimity of opinion as to the solution of the problem of taxation. The idea of independence was repulsive to many. Through the early part of the period which the letters cover, a clear distinction is often made between the acts of the Ministry and Parliament and those of the King. Re-

ferences are frequent to the stupidity of the Ministry or to the ministerial army. It was the Ministry headed by Lord North that the colonists were opposing. Resistance to ministerial oppression and parliamentary legislation, many colonists considered possible without disloyalty to the King. Civil war did not necessarily mean a desire for independence. A gentleman in New York wrote on June 21, 1775, before the news of the battle of Bunker Hill had arrived, "It is a gross calumny to say, that we are aiming at independency, for our political principles are the same that raised the house of Hanover to the throne; and were your ministers to adopt these principles, we would immediately lay down our arms." In the reaction to the battle of Bunker Hill, however, this feeling against independence began to break down and in the following year crystallized into a determination to be free. A Quaker, writing from Philadelphia on March 6, 1776, says, "I now apprehend the time is not far off, when the colonies will set up an independent standard"; and he justifies this action by the argument "that a people, who can make a king by creation, can by the same rule take that delegated power from him, instances of which have often happened in Great Britain." Many an Englishman who read these letters in the newspapers would appreciate the force of the reasoning which coupled the tyranny of the Stuarts with the acts of the Ministry of George III and which emphasized the constitutional aspects of colonial resistance to the "Five Intolerable Acts" and to taxation without representation.

It is surprising that so few letters dealing with the



Declaration of Independence appeared in the newspapers. It was evidently considered but the formal statement of a foregone conclusion. *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* stated on August 15, "Copies of the Declaration of war by the Provincials are now in town," and on August 17 printed the Declaration in full. A leading article in the same issue began, "An American and a friend to the liberties of his country desires the avowed friends of American rights in England, to declare what lengths they will go in support of the common cause." *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, in its issue of August 14-16, printed the Declaration and commented on it. On August 17 the *Daily Advertiser* printed it without comment, as did many other papers.

The strong religious sentiments that strengthened the political motives are evident in many of the letters from colonials. It is clear that they felt that their cause was righteous and that it could be left to the arbitrament of God. Again and again this is shown in references to the will of God and in an unshaken confidence in the support and interposition of Divine Providence. Many of their opponents recognized in the intensity of their feeling a resemblance to the fervor of the extreme Puritans in Cromwell's time and applied to the men of New England the epithet used to describe their prototypes of the seventeenth century, "the saints."

Early communications from the British officers and soldiers show the contempt of the newly arrived professional military men for the untrained American militia, their surprise and often disgust at the informal warfare waged and at the failure of the col-

onials to observe the accepted rules of "civilized" warfare. The colonials fought "after the Indian fashion." One soldier wrote after the battles of Lexington and Concord, "And though the whole country about us was raised and they had every superiority which numbers and knowledge of the country could give them, the rebels never made one gallant or manly attempt upon us." Then came the waking-up of the British soldiers to the essential bravery of the colonials, to their unrivalled marksmanship, and to their astounding facility with the spade. With reference to this last point an officer wrote shortly before the evacuation of Boston, "This morning at day-break we discovered two redoubts on the hill on Dorchester Point, and two smaller works on their flanks. They were all raised during the night, with an expedition equal to that of the Genii belonging to Aladin's wonderful lamp."

The discontent of the officers and soldiers is evident in many of the letters, not only with regard to conditions incident to the siege, but to the cause in which they were enlisted. The atmosphere of Boston was tense under pressure of the siege and the constant apprehension of attack by superior numbers. The forced inactivity led to irritability and friction between soldier and civilian as well as between army and navy. Poor food and confinement led to disease. Many disliked thoroughly the idea of fighting against their fellow countrymen; the shedding of English blood by Englishmen was repugnant to them. To many British soldiers as well as to colonials civil war was abhorrent.

With the memory of the recent war fresh in mind,

it is interesting to read of the earlier methods of warfare; of the short range of the guns and their inaccurate fire; of the men contending for the cannon balls as they rolled along. The battle of Bunker Hill was watched by crowds of spectators, safe on the surrounding heights. There were charges of outrages on both sides. On the one hand there were the tales of scalping; on the other of the killing of defenceless women and children and of the wanton destruction of Charlestown. The European soldier, accustomed to close formation in attacking and defending and to his strict manual of arms, could not view with equanimity the casual methods of the colonials at Lexington and Concord; to him there was something not quite honorable in seeking the protection of a stone wall. To the American, accustomed to the frontiersman's methods, it was foolhardy to expose himself unnecessarily.

An occasional letter included in this volume has been printed elsewhere, in Force's *American Archives* and in other historical works; most of them, however, are gathered here for the first time. The collection is intended to show the evolution of opinion in the American colonies during the early days of the Revolution as well as what contemporaries knew of events which were taking place. The necessity of looking up official documents and other more accurate accounts of battles and events before the descriptive portions of the letters can be accepted, is evident; but it is hoped that this volume offers a background of fact and opinion that will be found not only picturesque, but also illuminating.





LETTERS ON  
THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

1774



# LETTERS ON THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

1774

*Extract of a letter from Maryland, dated Baltimore,  
Sept. 21, 1774.*<sup>1</sup>

Our public affairs now are in a very critical and important situation. Our Colonies have never been so unanimous in any matter as they are now. A General Congress is sitting at Philadelphia, but their deliberations are kept profoundly secret, nor will the result of them be divulged till they rise, which it is expected will be about two or three weeks hence, having already sat three weeks. From the instructions given to the several Delegates by their respective provinces, I think we may assuredly expect a non-importation immediately, and a non-exportation to Great Britain at some future conditional day. Ireland, perhaps, and the West Indies, will be brought in, if other means fail. The people of Boston and the Massachusetts Bay are determined, at all events, not to submit; and both they and the other New England governments will certainly resist unto blood ere they surrender their liberty. Money, provisions, nay warlike stores, are sent to the Massachusetts from all the colonies, who universally are determined to support them to the utmost of their power. You will see by the papers a small sample of the spirit of the people from a late alarm at Boston when it was rumoured that General Gage had fired on the town and killed

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Jan. 4, 1775.

several people. The news, tho' false, flew with amazing rapidity, having reached Philadelphia in four days,<sup>1</sup> which you know is 400 miles. Not less than thirty (many accounts say fifty) thousand men were on their march to Boston completely armed in 48 hours. We expect to hear every moment of some unlucky rencounter between the troops and the people. The General appears to be greatly alarmed at the universal opposition he meets with, and is calling in all the troops from Quebec, New York, Philadelphia &c. to strengthen his army, and is besides fortifying the town as if apprehensive of an attack in his camp. It is said he has wrote for more troops, but if the Minister has determined at all events to enforce obedience to the late acts,<sup>2</sup> he must station a very numerous army at every civil officer's house in the province. I do not believe men will be found hardy enough to undertake the execution of any part of the laws lately enacted for the government of Massachusetts Bay. All who appear the least disaffected must fly the country, and take shelter with the army, as indeed a number, though small, have already done. One thing I must not omit to mention, and that is the total disuse of tea, which is likely to happen through all America. You may ride days, nay weeks, and never get a drop; many people, especially in Virginia, having destroyed their tea, and none ever purchasing any after their present stock is gone. I am inclined

<sup>1</sup> The express telling of the encounter at Lexington, which left Watertown at ten o'clock on the morning of the battle, did not reach Philadelphia until the late afternoon of April 24, more than five days later.

<sup>2</sup> "The Five Intolerable Acts" were the Boston Port Bill, the Massachusetts Regulating Act, the Quartering Act, the Bill for the Impartial Administration of Justice, and the Quebec Act.



to believe too that one article of association will be, never to purchase or use any East-India goods from the British East-India Company at any future time, if the Boston people are obliged to pay for the tea destroyed, till such time as the said Company shall repay them.

*Extract of a letter from Annapolis, Oct. 24.<sup>1</sup>*

In my last I advised you of a vessel being arrived here from London, having tea on board. You will see the fate of it on the News-papers. The people from the Country met here; some insisted on hanging Mr Anthony Stewart, the gentleman who paid the duty of the tea; others were for tarring and feathering him, and a great many were for destroying his house, &c. and with difficulty they were appeased with the burning of the vessel and tea. Notwithstanding when the question was put to the mob, whether they were for having the vessel burned or not, a great majority were against burning her, yet the minority threatened so much, that most people thought it best to comply to prevent worse consequences. From this you may judge of what small security people have for their property here.<sup>2</sup>

*Extract of a letter from Boston, Nov. 8.<sup>3</sup>*

In this land of bustling am I safe arrived, among the most social, polite, and sensible people under heaven.

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Dec. 30-Jan. 2, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Stewart, owner of the brig and signer of the non-importation agreement, paid the duty on the tea; then later in the presence of a threatening mob went on board and set fire to the ship, which, with sails set and colors flying, burned up off Windmill Point.

<sup>3</sup> *London Chronicle*, Jan. 12, 1775.

— To strangers friendly and kind — to Englishmen most generously so. Much have I travelled, and much have I been pleased with my excursions. This is a fine country; for everything that can gratify the man, or please the fancy. War, that evil, look all around us; the country expect it, and are prepared to die freemen, rather than live what they call slaves. The Patriots here are, in general, men of good sense, and high in the cause. I have been introduced to General Gage and the Tories — to Hancock and the Whigs. — I find myself a high son, that is the strongest side at present. How long I shall stay here is uncertain. Much have I been entreated to settle here as Physician, and was peace and unanimity once more established, I should prefer this place to any I ever saw. The town is finely situated, very considerable, and well worth preserving. If hostile measures take place, I believe it will fall a sacrifice. I hope, on your side the water, measures of prudence will be proceeded on; here they seem to consider all prudence as pusillanimous; multitudinous are the curses, and manifold the daily prayers raised by this praying people, for the eternal destruction of N——<sup>1</sup> and H——<sup>2</sup>; what will be the consequence heaven knows: if England gives up, we must sacrifice all her friends here, and render the Americans still more daring; if she persists, the first hour of blood will be her last of glory in this country: I think she may destroy it, but never conquer it.

<sup>1</sup> Frederick, Lord North, Prime Minister of England during the period of the Revolution.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Hutchinson. Governor of Massachusetts, who was then in England.

## ORDERS OF A QUAKER SHIP-OWNER 7

*Genuine copy of instructions given by an eminent Quaker of the first family and fortune in New York, to the Captain of his ship, bound to London.*<sup>1</sup>

NEW YORK, Nov. 10, 1774.

Copy of orders from — to —.

Proceed with the ship —, under thy command, the first favourable wind, to the Port of London; deliver the cargo as consigned, and proceed as — shall direct; should they order thee back to this place, or any part of the Continent, it is my positive orders that thou comply strictly with what is directed by the General Congress, (that is) not to ship thyself, nor suffer any other person or persons to ship on board thee, any kind of merchandise whatever, nor no presents of any kind; and if any passenger should come out with thee be sure to see that they bring nothing out of any value whatever, except apparel &c. otherwise thee must expect to meet the greatest displeasure from thy Owners, and the people in general, with loss of place for ever and ever.

I wish thee a pleasant voyage, &c.

*Extract of a letter from a gentleman, inhabitant of an inland town in America, to his friend at present residing in this city.*<sup>2</sup>

BOSTON, Nov. 15, 1774.

Dear Sir,

The great revolutions in the political world since I had the pleasure of an interview with you have a natural tendency to strengthen the social affection, and to make an epistolary correspondence between friends on different sides of the Atlantic an useful,

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Jan. 2-4, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> *Bristol Gazette*, Jan. 12, 1775.

and of consequence, to a good mind, a desirable thing.

The multiplied innovations in our civil polity, previous to the port-bill, had raised the jealousy and awaken'd the fears of our western inhabitants. This led them to enquire in the exercise of that understanding, which God Almighty had given them. Accustomed to compare and connect ideas on common occurrences and religious subjects, they thought for themselves; neither influenced by prejudice, or led by party. An enquiry facilitated by such habits of thinking soon ended in a knowledge of their grievances, a confirmation of their fears, and an unshaken determination to defend their lives, their liberties, and their property at the dearest rate. In this way, at length, the alarm had reached the most obscure: there was not a jobber in the street, a peasant in the field, or a cottager on the rugged mountain's side, whose heart did not glow with ardent zeal for vigorous or self-denying exertions in defence of his invaded rights.

The shock of the port-bill lasted but a few days, from which they rose superior to all their former feelings. They now felt themselves willing to endure any hardships, to encounter any dangers, to sacrifice ease, health, wealth, and even life itself to the sacred calls of their country. — An unlucky incident soon gave them an opportunity of trying the strength of those virtues. A false alarm occasioned by the troops taking a quantity of powder from *Mistic* (of which you have undoubtedly had a particular account) was hastily sounded through the country: — a report having reached *Northampton* on Saturday about sunset,



that the regulars had marched into the country, and were killing its inhabitants, was soon proclaim'd in our back towns.<sup>1</sup> They who had no prospects of gain to lead them abroad, would not suffer a sense of danger to keep them at home; unaw'd by fear, from the dictates of natural conscience and the emotions of sympathy, without hesitation, they seized their guns, their horses and provisions, and set off, with a determination to attempt, risque, and force all in defence of their innocent but distressed fellow-countrymen. Many of the women, with seeming impatience, fixed and hurried away their husbands. So great was the dispatch, that many, by travelling most of the night, reached Northampton early next morning; others followed in quick succession, leaving their towns almost without an inhabitant capable of bearing arms. I am credibly informed, that there were instances of ministers marching at the head of their parishes, with guns at their backs.

The united language of almost every man is, that he has a right to be happy; that he is determined to be free; and that he chooses both under the auspices of the illustrious house of Brunswick, and in connection with our parent state. — These rights they claim not only under a charter from a temporary king, but from one under the broad seal of heaven — from the king of Kings, and Lord of all the earth. They say, these rights were created in them by the decrees of providence; that they were born with them — exist

<sup>1</sup> Early in the morning on September 1, a detachment of British soldiers removed a quantity of powder from the powder house on Quarry Hill in Charlestown, where it was customary to store powder belonging to the towns and the province. This fact was the basis for alarming reports which spread with great rapidity through the country.



with them — are founded upon the immutable and eternal maxims of right, reason, and the never failing principles of strict justice; and therefore ought not to be surrendered but with their heart's blood, — or to be torn from them by any power of human institution.

These ideas they cherish — these truths they forcibly feel — these principles they avow — and upon these principles they hope invariably to practice against the open exertions, and the more secret machinations of their inveterate enemies. They will therefore in safety to themselves, and from the dictates of an enlightened conscience, cheerfully give up the friendship of that man who is not a friend to his country; renounce that family alliance — those ties which would bind them with the galling chains of slavery, detest, thoroughly detest, that official dependence which is opposed to the blessings of freedom, and the eternal and indefensible rights of mankind; and ultimately, if reduced to the sad necessity, take the sword, and appeal to the God of battles — the great general of the universe.

*The following extract of a letter, received last Saturday from Boston, is so full of good sense, and breathes so proper a spirit, with regard to the present situation of our affairs in North America, that I hope it will neither be unedifying nor unentertaining, if you lay it before the public in your next paper.*<sup>1</sup>

*I am, Sir, your constant reader,*

*A. B.*

BOSTON, Nov. 20, 1774.

Should the mad people of this country take it into their heads not to trade with our islands after the

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, Jan. 19, 1775.

first of next September,<sup>1</sup> in that case, indeed, you, and others in your situation, should fall upon some scheme for supplying yourselves with such articles as you cannot get from home on easy terms; but as that period is at a distance, and the measure appears to me to be altogether impracticable, I believe we have nought to dread from their menaces, and especially if Government behaves with vigour and spirit on the occasion: but should we give way, or even temporize, we should have cause to rue such a conduct, as from that moment we may bid adieu to all power and authority over these Colonies. It is evident, that the proceedings of the continental Congress, that they are intended to create an influence at the general election in favour of America, by interesting your merchants and manufacturers in their behalf.<sup>2</sup> They are encouraged to expect, from their success on former occasions, that the Legislature will be forced into a compliance with their unreasonable demands. I hope, however, that motives of resentment, if not of policy, will induce them to forego a temporary interest, rather than continue an ignominious commerce upon a footing so precarious, and that the Ministry will have the virtue and spirit to enforce and execute such measures as will reduce these untoward, refractory, and ungrateful people to a proper sense of their duty and dependence on the parent state, whose name has been their protection from the beginning, and to whom they now owe their very existence. Although I am no politician, yet as I drew

<sup>1</sup> The day set for the non-exportation agreement to go into force was September 10, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> The Congress, on October 21, had approved an address to the people of Great Britain.

my breath on that abused and insulted island, I feel myself hurt, as I believe every Englishman must, unless swayed by sordid ends. If these people only contended for the liberty of taxing themselves, no man would reasonably object to it on the ground of *inexpediency*, but that will not satisfy them; we must even give up the right not only to *taxation*, but *legislation* likewise. The acts of trade, they say, they are ready to submit to, in consideration of the protection that our navy affords to their navigation, which is merely a motive of convenience; but then the jurisdiction of the Court of Admiralty must be circumscribed; that is, the only means by which we can enforce the execution of the acts of trade must be abolished. The partiality of Juries, in matters of trade and revenue, has long been experienced in America, and it is to that cause we are to ascribe the extension of the power of this civil law Court. In short, Sir, the Americans are contending for power, and that I think is manifest, notwithstanding all their art and cunning. A total denial of your power would be too bare-faced; that would silence their factious and seditious advocates at home, and *John Bull* might be roused to a proper sense of the indignities which they daily offer to him. The inhabitants of New England are the descendants of Cromwell's *elect*, and they not only inherit their sentiments in civil and religious matters, but they have copied after them during the contest they have had with the Mother Country. They shew the same encroaching jesuitical and hypocritical disposition; every concession on your part has only produced fresh demands on theirs. Nothing will satisfy them or conciliate them to your govern-

ment, and nothing but force can extort submission and obedience from them. The Church of England are the only balance against them. From hence to Maryland, the people of that persuasion are uniformly attached to Great Britain; but to the southward of that they are equally disaffected, with this difference, that the southern people are inclined to continue a commercial intercourse with Great Britain; whereas the northern people, I mean the New Englanders and the Congregationalists, and the Presbyterians every where, are not only inimical to us, but determined to break off all connections with us as soon as they can. There is a great part of the province of New York well attached to the Mother Country; and the Quakers of Pennsylvania and New Jersey are well inclined to the same side of the question. Affairs are now brought to a crisis in this province; every man has been obliged to take a side at least in this town, and the friends of government are very respectable in point of property, and not inconsiderable as to numbers. The country, indeed, has been for some time a continued scene of licentiousness. If any man broached an idea repugnant to the general sense of the people, he was denominated a *Tory*, and treated with every ignominy which malice could invent, until he made his peace by a recantation of his past errors; those who addressed Governor Hutchinson<sup>1</sup> were the first objects of popular resentment, and the new councillors<sup>2</sup> were next upon the list. The few whose circum-

<sup>1</sup> On the eve of Governor Hutchinson's departure for England an address endorsing his régime was presented to him signed by a number of merchants, shopkeepers, royal officers, and others.

<sup>2</sup> The councillors appointed under the Massachusetts Government Act.



stances would permit them to quit their homes, their families, and their affairs, took refuge in town. There are, however, many respectable people all over the province, who, detesting the anarchy which prevails, as well as the means by which it was introduced, and seeing the folly and madness of the people, would readily join the King's standard if it was hoisted. And in some towns the inhabitants have entered into an association for their mutual protection against violence; and it is believed that the disposition which the Canadians have shewed in consequence of the act passed respecting them, has contributed in some measure toward bringing the inhabitants of the back country into a more moderate way of thinking. Some parties of Indians in their war habits, with a Frenchman or two, as is supposed, at the head of each, have lately made their appearance among them, and diffused a universal terror. Such, however, is the influence of the faction which presides at the head of affairs, that nine tenths of the people will greedily swallow the most glaring fictions which they shall think proper to propagate, and nothing can get the better of their infatuation, but a spirited exertion of power, which all good men are waiting to see take place.

*Extract of a letter from an Officer in the Army, dated Boston, November 22.<sup>1</sup>*

According to my promise I write to you on my arrival here. The troops are just put into quarters. The workmen at Boston were so mulish, that the General was obliged to send to Nova Scotia, for carpenters

<sup>1</sup> *Bristol Gazette*, Jan. 12, 1775.



and bricklayers to fit up barracks for our accommodation. The country is very plentiful, and all sorts of provisions cheaper than in London, tho' much risen from such a number of people being got together. The inhabitants of this province retain the religious and civil principles brought over by their forefathers, in the reign of K. Charles I. and are at least an hundred years behind hand with the people of England in every refinement. With the most austere shew of devotion, they are destitute of every principle of religion or common honesty, and are reckoned the most arrant cheats and hypocrites on the whole continent of America. The women are very handsome, but, like old mother Eve, very frail. Our camp has been as well supplied in that way since we have been on Boston common, as if our tents were pitched on Blackheath. As to what you hear of their taking up arms to resist the force of England, it is mere bullying, and will go no further than words: whenever it comes to blows, he that can run fastest will think himself best off. Believe me, any two regiments here ought to be decimated, if they did not beat in the field the whole force of the Massachusetts Province; for tho' they are numerous, they are but a mob without order or discipline, and very awkward at handling their arms. If you have ever seen a train-band Colonel marching his regiment from Ludgate-hill to the Artillery-Ground, in them you have an epitome of the discipline of an American army. We expect to pass the winter very quietly. The Saints<sup>1</sup> here begin to

<sup>1</sup> A derisive term used by the British soldiery to describe the colonials of more rigid principles. In the time of Cromwell it was applied to extreme Puritans; in the early nineteenth century the friends of Negro emancipation were often termed "saints."

relish the money we spend among them, and, I believe, notwithstanding all their noise, would be very sorry to part with us.

*Extract of a letter from Boston, Nov. 24.*<sup>1</sup>

It is great injustice to the Patriots on your side of the water to charge the Scots here with being enemies to the Americans. A Scotch shoemaker was the leader of all our mobs, during the time of the Stamp-act, which pulled down the Stamp Office, demolished the Lieutenant Governor's house, and broke into the Secretary's, and forced him to Liberty Tree,<sup>2</sup> where they swore him out of office. This person, whose name is Mackintosh,<sup>3</sup> has ever since continued a leading man among us. Another Scotchman, whose name is H—— p,<sup>4</sup> (originally a weaver from Haddington, a small town somewhere in the south of Scotland, but who left Glasgow in the year 1746, from an apprehension of the prophecies of Thomas, a Rhymer, being nearly accomplished) has also made a considerable figure among us in our late disturbances. This man, naturally of a superstitious turn of mind, brought with him to America all the necessary qualifications for a New England saint of the first order; and he has not hid his talent in a napkin. Having been very successful in trade, he purchased an estate in Brooklyne, a few miles from this town; and pretending to be a friend to government, got himself made a Justice of the Peace by Governor Bernard;

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Feb. 25, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> A fine large elm near the Boylston market in Hanover Square, under which it was customary to hold patriotic meetings. British soldiers in the winter of 1775-76 cut it down and made it into firewood.

<sup>3</sup> Ebenezer Mackintosh.

<sup>4</sup> William Hyslop.

but was no sooner appointed, than he acted in direct opposition to his former pretences. He was Moderator of the town meetings at Brooklyne, where he lives; was of the Committee of Correspondence, and one of the Committee that came in from the neighboring towns to assist and advise with the metropolis on the destruction of the teas. This Justice of the Peace had too much prudence, and too much regard for his own person, to go on board the ships himself; but it is certain he came into Boston, and lent his advice, and the tea was accordingly destroyed. In all our late commotions he has possessed himself on the side of the saints, and an enemy to the British merchants. He will soon go to Great Britain, and has promised to tell the people of England that they are imposed upon; and the merchants that they must be ruined, if the Parliament pretend to usurp any authority over our House of Assembly. While he remains in Britain, he will, I suppose, reside at Glasgow, where you will have an opportunity of seeing this Scotch American patriot. By the vessel which will bring you this letter, I shall send a packet of news-papers; so need not repeat to you any of our publick news; they will come to you without any postage, as she is bound for the Clyde. I hope you will make this public, that the stains that have been thrown upon the Scotch in New England, for their want of patriotism, and for their taking part with Government, may be wiped off.

*Extract of a letter from Newcastle County, New England,  
Nov. 29.<sup>1</sup>*

It is truly pleasing to a friend of American liberty to see the country so generally aware of their danger, and attentive to the means of safety. Yesterday the inhabitants of each hundred, in this County, met to choose a Committee of inspection: I was at one meeting, where a Briton, who has been blinded with perpetual stories of our lethargic state, in the southern provinces, would have been surprised to see the number of farmers who have laid aside every other concern, lest improper persons should be chosen; enough were ready to expend what time or money might be necessary, in watching or detecting Poltroons, if any there should be: I believe they will be rare; for the articles of association <sup>2</sup> are so many sacred laws. Tell a country man that after such a time we are desired not to purchase certain articles; his answer is, — Well, I can do without them: — He is all resolution in the means to escape slavery.

By the numerous papers, printed on this Continent, we find that large Committees are appointed, and appointing, throughout the Colonies, to see that the regulations of the Congress are punctually complied with.

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, Jan. 24-26, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> The non-importation and non-exportation agreement, which was signed October 20 by fifty-three members of the Continental Congress, binding themselves and their constituents to its observance.

*Extract of a letter from New York, dated Nov.<sup>1</sup>*

It is this day reported that Gov. Carleton, of Quebec, had, by letter, offered Gen. Gage, a reinforcement, of 6000 Canadians besides Indians, if requisite. Is there not a good deal of probability in this report, since we know that the troops which Lord Barrington informed the House of Commons were on their destination to Boston, are now countermanded? The scene begins to open, the savages and Roman Catholics being let loose by our humane Ministers to butcher our suffering Protestant brethren.<sup>2</sup>

*An extract of a letter from South Carolina, by the Swallow Packet Boat.<sup>3</sup>*

The vessel that was ordered to convey here the Deputies from the General Assembly of the Representatives of the different American Colonies, brought me from Boston. The three Deputies have in charge to this Colony, the immediately raising their quota of troops for the American army of observation. The delay that prevented the meeting of our American Assembly, vainly dignified by the title of Congress, was, not receiving sooner from Europe the Resolu-

<sup>1</sup> *London Evening Post*, Jan. 7-10, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> A reference to the Quebec Act. Frequent appeals of this sort were made to Puritan intolerance by leaders in the revolutionary movement. Even as intelligent a man as Ezra Stiles, President of Yale College, made the following entry in his diary under the date of August 23, 1774: "The King has approved the Quebec Act, extending that Province to the Ohio and Mississippi and comprehending nearly Two Thirds of the Territory of English America, and establishing the Roman Church and IDOLATRY over all that space; . . . Astonishing that King, Lords and Commons, a whole Protestant Parliament should expressly establish Popery over three Quarters of their Empire."

<sup>3</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, Feb. 1, 1775.



tions of the Congress, well manufactured in London; and the ill-concerted plan of non-importation, you will have so much compassion, I trust, as not to impute to our consultations, but let it be esteemed, as truth requires, the true, genuine, unadulterated British manufacture, from the same American warehouse well established, and now in full profit, in —, not far distant from the banks of the Thames. That fatal event to all our American operations, the dissolution of the late Parliament, has marplotted all our plots. We were taught to believe the present Minister, whose firmness, resolution, and attachment to the real interest of Great Britain could only be so much disgusted by such opponents, and by such an opposition to the measures of Government, that no other consideration would prevent his meeting the new Parliament in the character of Minister: therefore we were instructed with an extensive plan for a winter's campaign in America, during the last months of the supposed dotage of the existence of the late Parliament, merely to tease, for more could not be done with the present Minister, yet to intimidate his successor from hesitating an hour to repeal every American Act. We received the strongest utterances from Europe, that our perseverance and an effected resolution only of resisting by force would effectually distress a new Minister, — a young Administration, — conciliating measures would be the adopted plan of unexperienced, polite, acquiescing Ministers; that callous old age must follow a violent, coercive, tyrannical system; that such would be the unfeeling maxims of veterans, hackneyed in the politics of non-resistance, of absolute submission to the will and nod

of the Sovereign, with much more of such matter that deserves not attention, becomes merely the subject of ridicule and contempt, were contained in our great political code, in our American creed, which every saint at Boston rehearsed at that Indian shrine of freedom, the Tree of Liberty, with more enthusiastic frenzy than what is expressed by the frantic infidel at the tomb of Mecca, or the bigotted pilgrim at the chapel of Loretto. Now you receive the European plan for our military operations. An allied army of Observation from the United Provinces of America to be immediately formed, under whose standard the sons of some distinguished characters in Europe were to range themselves; a detached corps of 9000 men upon the Northern Frontiers, another of 6000 men in our southern district; a cordon of military force to extend to the Mississippi, to open a certain communication with New Orleans: our arsenal of arms, ammunition, and artillery with ten detachments volans, each consisting of 500 confederate Indians, to harass the convoys of British troops and their detached parties; continually to alarm the royal governments of Florida, Pensacola and Quebec. It was determined, that if we found ourselves unable to defeat and scalp the British troops, totally to ruin the whole country, and retire to the western banks of the Mississippi, and make that great river the barrier against European barbarity. By the most providential event this destructive plan is no longer pursued; all the calm tranquility of peace is re-established, and the embers of our fire of sedition and rebellion will be totally extinguished, unless fann'd by resolutions, determinations, addresses, commercial agreements, contracts,

resolves, with such-like fuel, for renewing that pile of American fire, fury, and frenzy, that has inflamed this whole continent.

Compassion, real humanity, forbids my coming with your earnest request, in now sending, what in this moment of tranquility must be unnecessary, a more general list of our manufacturers in London, of American grievances; such as would never have inspired the most heated mind of any Bostonian Saint, praying to be sacrificed a martyr in the cause of liberty. The nine names you read inclosed are such, who might inflame with every degree of the most extravagant frenzy men more wise, less seditious, than the wretched inhabitants of this unfortunate country. Heaven avert! that my information may in any manner tend to accusations, impeachments, trials, or to what is more dreadful than criminal punishment.

*Extract of a letter from Annapolis in Maryland from a female Correspondent, dated Dec. 2, brought by Capt. Lyddle.*<sup>1</sup>

Pray what are your ministry doing? Making a rod for their own backs; for they never will enslave the brave Americans. We have done with you; the non-importation took place yesterday; and now you shall see how we can do without you; we can live as well as need to be: but I cannot tell how we shall dress: I have cloaths enough for some time, but have no pins to put them on; but never fear, I shall have my share of what there are. There is no more tea to be drank here, but very good coffee. The 19th of last

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and Daily Advertiser*, Feb. 1, 1775.

October we burned a ship, tea and all;<sup>1</sup> for which you'll, I suppose, send us some red-coats.

*Extract of a letter from a gentleman in America to his friend in this city, dated the 4th of Dec., 1774.*<sup>2</sup>

The affairs of America seem approaching to a crisis. The Bostonians, encouraged by the Resolves of the Continental Congress, appear determined to proceed to extremities rather than submit, and will in all probability be assisted by the other Colonies. What will be the event Heaven only knows. The resentment of the populace is still kept alive by the seditious machinations of the Republican party, and except in Amboy, where they are all staunch friends to government, it is dangerous to offer an argument in favour of administration, unless you are ambitious of wearing a suit of tar and feathers.

*Among a variety of humorous occurrences that fall out between the Bostonians and soldiers, we will give our readers the following one, for their amusement, being an extract of a letter from an Officer at Boston, to a Gentleman in Glasgow, dated Dec. 5, 1774.*<sup>3</sup>

A corporal having it his turn to buy butter for his mess, he sets off to purchase. On his way he was accosted by a country yanky well mounted, "Whether bound corporal?" To buy butter, replied he. Come, says the other, I will sell you what you want, or find it for you at the most reasonable rates. They quit the street, and betake themselves to an inn, where the corporal was genteelly treated by the yanky, and

<sup>1</sup> The brig Peggy Stewart. See letter dated Oct. 24, 1774, Annapolis, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Jan. 13, 1775.

<sup>3</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, Feb. 13, 1775.



strongly urged to desert. After much solicitation, and receiving twenty dollars, with a promise of a Lieutenancy in the militia, he consents. The red coat is thrown off, one of another colour put on; though the yanky was for burning the red coat, our corporal prevailed to have it only secreted in the portmanteau: thus agreed, both mounted the yanky's horse, our corporal before, and the yanky behind. A new difference had like to take place; the yanky is for going a back way, but the corporal will keep the high street, assuring him, tho' he had been but few years a soldier, yet he had marched thro' most of Britain and Ireland, and was never seen on horseback by any in the regiment; adding, that the very circumstance of being horseback put him out of all fear of being in the least detected by the guards.

The yanky satisfied, off they went, and passed very well till they came opposite the barrack where our corporal lodged. A thought striking him, to tell his messmates to purchase butter for themselves, as he proposed to take leave of them, he turns his horse's head and on they ride. His comrades perceiving him, they flock round him to know how he became so metamorphosed. Our recruiting officer was so startled at the sight, he alights, runs off, leaves his recruit possessed of the dollars, a good horse and saddle, the portmanteau, five good shirts, and a suit of clothes.

The corporal's fidelity and humour has attracted the notice of the principal officers; so that he will soon have his knot changed for an halbert.



*Copy of a letter from Boston, Dec. 8, 1774.*<sup>1</sup>

This country is now in open rebellion; but we have not yet come to the last act, that of fighting. Those of the rebels, who are most moderate and conversible, say, that they expect a civil war in the spring, as they cannot bring themselves to believe that Great Britain will ever comply with their demands, and therefore they all lay their account with being conquered, and of course ruined. Some days ago the Scarborough arrived here; by her we received advice of three ships of the line, and six hundred marines being ordered for this place, one of which, with Major Pitcairn on board, has since arrived. You will see in the papers the villainous resolve of the blacksmiths of Worcester County not to work for the gentlemen appointed Counsellors, who have long been obliged to quit the country and take shelter in Boston. The Provincial Congress, which consists of between two and three hundred members, have taken the whole Government of the country into their hands; the General Gage with his troops, has the care of Boston and the Tories only, a name given by the rebels to all the loyal and peaceable part of the community. This Provincial Congress has appointed a Province Treasurer,<sup>2</sup> and recommended to all the towns to oblige their collectors of taxes to pay the monies to him, and several towns have already been foolish enough to comply, and I make no doubt but all the rest will follow their example; for no man now living

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Jan. 17, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Gardner was appointed receiver-general of the province, October 28.

out of Boston dare dispute the authority of this self created body. But even this act of treason is trifling to many of their other proceedings. People travelling the high roads and seized, and obliged to declare themselves Whigs, their name for rebels, and to CURSE *the KING and the PARLIAMENT*, and to wish the island of Great Britain SUNK *in the SEA*, before they are permitted to pass; to such a height of phrenzy have the common people got thro' the delusions of the chief conspirators. They bully, swear, and threaten, that they will fight to the last drop of their blood; but we, who know them too well, do not believe one word of such blusterings. All their great deeds are committed on single and unarmed people, whom they can easily terrify into their measures. Last week the Inferior court was to have met at Charles-Town; but the members of the Provincial Congress, chosen for that county, waited upon two of the Judges, and ordered them to prorogue the Court by proclamation, which they were obliged to comply with. All the towns in the province, Boston excepted, are, at the desire of the Congress exercising their militia every fair day, and are also chusing their own militia officers; another open act of treason, in order to prepare themselves for the spring, when they boast they will take the field, and that fifty thousand regulars would make no impression upon them. Such a pack of rascals sure never existed in one place before. But tho' they are far more violent in their resolves and protestations than they ever were before, I do not find them in the least inclinable to keep them; and even that noxious herb tea has, I find, nothing nauseating in it, when smuggled from Hol-

land.<sup>1</sup> Thirty-six chests in one vessel, and eighteen in another, have been seized last month; and a captain of one of the King's schooners told me, he had an information about a week ago of twelve chests landed at Cape Cod, which the people there were about to destroy, but on being told it came from Holland, they assisted the owner to convey it to a place of safety: and notwithstanding their solemn league and covenant which they have signed and sworn, the gravest deacon among them will have no scruple of conscience in drinking it. The country people, who come to market, are constantly endeavouring to entice the soldiers to desert, but with little success, for some that deserted at first have since returned, and given woeful accounts of their ill treatment. Last week a corporal of one of the regiments was asked by a countryman to desert, and offered six dollars a month to teach their militia; the corporal pretended to be willing, and the countryman procured him a good suit of cloaths, which he put on and tied up his own in a bundle. They then went to mount the countryman's horse, when the corporal pretending he was not horseman enough to ride behind, the countryman allowed him to place himself in the saddle, and then got up behind; when they were seated, the corporal, instead of riding out of town, set the horse a galloping towards the Barracks, which when the Yankee discovered, he threw himself off, and the corporal continued his rout to the barracks. The countryman did not think fit to call for either horse or cloaths, and the matter being represented

<sup>1</sup> Even John Adams confessed that while dining with Hancock he drank "green tea from Holland, I hope but don't know."

to the General, he has ordered the Corporal to keep both.

*Copy of a letter received from Captain Cooper, dated New York, Dec. 10, 1774.*<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding the resolutions of the Congress, you may depend on it that this city and colony is the most submissive and obedient to the laws and acts of Parliament of any province on this continent; as a proof of it, we have not only built excellent barracks for the army, but also supply the troops with every necessary of life: beside which, the Assembly voted them the sum of two thousand pounds for the current year; and as an incontestable proof of their duty and loyalty, I am to acquaint you that the Assembly ordered the treasurer to remit to England fifteen hundred pounds, to be invested in an equestrian statue of the King, which on its arrival was erected in a square, amidst the acclamations of the better sort of people;<sup>2</sup> and yesterday we entered on the fourth year of its erection, when the Governor, Council, General Assembly, with the Mayor and Aldermen, together with the military and principal gentry, attended in procession to the spot, where, after surrounding the statue of their most gracious Sovereign, the Common Cryer made proclamation for the whole company to be uncovered, when an oration was made by one of the company, wherein he recited the many blessings they enjoyed under his pious reign, such as the repeal of the Stamp Act, that

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and Daily Advertiser*, Feb. 4, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> The statue of George III was erected in the Bowling Green after the repeal of the Stamp Act. See letter dated Staten Island, Aug. 17, 1776, p. 349.



on glass, paint and paper; and that the army hath been of great use in occasioning beneficial contracts; and that the ministry did not mean to enslave the colonies, as the people of New England foolishly imagined.

On the conclusion of this speech his Excellency the Governor, Council, Grand Assembly, military and gentry, drank his Majesty's health under a discharge of 33 guns from the fort. Judge from this behavior if administration has any opposition to fear from this province, and whether they ought not to make it their headquarters; I am sure the principal people wish it.

*Extract of a letter from Boston, New England,  
December 10, 1774.<sup>1</sup>*

You may probably remember, that last year our General Court passed a Vote for purchasing twelve brass field-pieces for the use of our militia, to which Governor Hutchinson gave his assent; in consequence whereof, 300 l. sterling was soon after paid by the Treasurer into the hands of our Commissary General, whose business of course it was to provide them. The Commissary General, who has also been lately our principal Delegate to the General Congress, sent an order for the field-pieces to a gentleman in London but *prudently* omitted sending the money.

Now, the gentleman to whom the order was sent, not having so high an opinion of the Commissary General as his rank and fortune entitled him to, would not execute the commission until he had the cash in his *own* hands; and lucky it was that he was

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, Jan. 19, 1775.



so scrupulous, for had the field-pieces arrived, there is no doubt they would have been seized by General Gage; and thus, but for the wise foresight of our Commissary in retaining the cash, would our heart's blood have been employed in purchasing weapons for our own destruction. No person who knows the fidelity, punctuality, and riches of Mr. Commissary General, can entertain the smallest doubt that he has put out the money at interest for the benefit of the province, and will *repay* the accumulated sum as soon as the Constitution is *restored* to us.

Pray observe, that all our bravadoes and resolves are only meant to frighten Great Britain, if we can — but we do not mean to fight. Some of our principal writers, who have for many years been constantly exciting us to insurrections, and who were to fight up to their knees in blood for their country and their countrymen, have been struck with an unaccountable pannick, and have *fled* the country. Of two of these desperate warriors, who have run away, that they may live to fight another day, I shall now give you some curious anecdotes. — The first, for some unusual practices in the law some time ago, was under the necessity of moving off to the southern colonies for the benefit of his health.<sup>1</sup> When matters were accommodated, he recovered, and began his journey homewards. At a tavern in North Carolina, when he was indulging himself in the liberty, which, as a writer in our papers, he had often taken to abusing Governor Tryon, he was stopped in his career by a Gentleman present, who had served under the Gov-

<sup>1</sup> Probably Josiah Quincy, who in February, 1773, went to Charleston South Carolina, for his health.

error. Our Petty-fogger, not liking the Gentleman's company, made an immediate retreat. The Gentleman, who happened to be travelling the same road, finding, upon his arrival at the next tavern, that our Boston Orator had been using great freedom there, not only with Mr. Tryon's character, but with his own, immediately set out in pursuit of him, and at last overtook him at a tavern where he had stopped for the night. — The Carolinian, without delay, demanded satisfaction of our Orator, who promised it in the morning, intending no doubt to have stolen off while the other was asleep; but the Carolinian telling him, that no time was so proper as the present, pulled a pair of pistols out of his pocket, and desired him to take one of them. The sight of these instruments of death had such an effect on our Patriot, that he instantly fainted; and his antagonist, after recommending him to the care of the people of the house, proceeded on his journey; justly looking upon such a poltroon as beneath the notice of a Gentleman.

You may also depend on the following anecdote. — When the troops arrived in this harbor, in the year 1768, from Halifax, this Worthy posted away to his father's house at Braintree, where he remained some time, till he was fully satisfied, that nothing of a hostile nature was intended either against the country or individuals; after which he returned to Boston to practice as a pettyfogger in the law.

Some years after this, his father's house was burned down, but not so suddenly but that they had time to save a great part of the furniture. — In taking down the bed, where our Orator usually lay, a large paper parcel tumbled down, which was carefully sealed,

and upon it were written these words: — “*Not to be opened until after my decease.*” — The father, however, whose curiosity was roused, and who did not consider himself as bound by the prohibition, made free with the seals; and on opening the bundle, found manuscript copies, in his son’s handwriting, of many of the most seditious publications of that day. — Such were the fears of our Patriots then; nor are we without instances of like apprehensions among them now; and I hope with more reason.

You will probably have heard of the great Dr. Young having left us. I am well assured, that he declared to some of his friends, that though they were pleased to laugh at General Gage’s manœuvres in occupying the avenues of town and fortifying the Neck, yet he could see through his whole plan; AND HE WOULD BE DAMNED IF HE SHOULD NAB HIM. In pursuance of this foresight the Doctor fled to Newport in Rhode Island Government, from whence he sent the following letter to be printed here, as an apology for his flight and desertion of our glorious cause:

“SIR,

“Understanding that not only the banditti of traitors to the liberty of their country had *scoffed* at my removal, as an act of cowardice and desertion of the cause I have for many years laboured to defend, but also that many honest Whigs thought I was rather hasty in my resolution, and might have remained till things became more pressing:

“For the satisfaction of every honest mind, who may have the least concern about this affair, I send you this fair account of the motives which induced me to this step.

“The tools of tyranny rendered me obnoxious to the party in general, but to none more than to that original enemy

of this country's rights, who has been lately so often closeted at Kew. I well know that this viper would, for a while, impose upon both Majesty and Ministry, and carry what points he pleased with them. I considered the present day, when supposed convenience and necessities of state outweighed all notions of right and ancient usage, and do not question but the multiplied threatenings of *taking up* some principal incendiaries, as those persons have been called, who have spoken, written, and acted in vindication of the invaded rights of the people, and conveying them overseas for an impartial trial, were sounded in a settled determination to put the said execrable project into execution, as soon as it might be presumed to be done in safety.

"I HAVE A WIFE, whose anxiety for my safety, began with the first opposition to the Stamp Act in the City of Albany; MANY PERILOUS INCIDENTS have renewed and augmented the distress of her mind, on this account, till it at length became intolerable.

"A LARGE FAMILY OF HELPLESS CHILDREN, in a place where I had NOT ONE relation or acquaintance of above EIGHT YEARS STANDING, and that place now reducing to a state prison, were objects I could not view without some degree of emotion.

"I considered that I had faithfully done my part in possessing my countrymen with a sense of their natural and charter rights, and that my services in that way could be of little more importance to them, the time being now come when ARMS seem the proper argument to hold up to our oppressors. The parties cooped up within these walls, may have those ignominiously taken out of their hands; but this is an indignity which a risque of my life, on anything like equal terms, shall precede my submission to.

"I can in this place serve the common cause of America as effectually as I have done in any part of it. The friends of liberty here have afforded me a reception too kind to be communicated by any language in my power; I shall to the utmost of my poor abilities endeavour to deserve it.

"Your humble servant,

"Thomas Young."



The Doctor, by original enemy and viper, means Governor Hutchinson; but the loyal people here have more occasion to dread the Governor than the rebels; and are actually now under great anxiety, lest, through his interposition, former destructive and unsteady measures should be recurred to. Doctor Young is very plain in his letter; he pleads his own and his wife's *fears* as an excuse for his *flight*; he is also very candid in saying, that he cannot fight unless he is attended by acquaintances of more than eight years standing; and thinking himself safe in another colony, he there blusters that he will risk his life, after having fairly run away from Boston.

His wife had some foundation for her fears; for she saw him one day very soundly beaten by a young gentleman of only 16 years of age, a son of Dr. Whitworth's.<sup>1</sup> Young had falsely accused Dr. Whitworth in the public prints with killing a patient; Dr. Whitworth intended to have chastised the defamer himself; but his son, a spirited youth, meeting Young first, saved him the trouble. This beating, and another which he received from an officer in the army, whom without any provocation he followed in the streets, and abused as an hired slave, and tool of oppression, are the only *perilous incidents* in which this intrepid champion of liberty was ever engaged.

The above are undeniable samples of the courage of our rebels.

At present I am happy to find that the Parliament and nation are at last roused from their lethargy, and see the absolute necessity of bringing the Colonies to a sense of their duty. I am well persuaded, and I

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Miles Whitworth.



dare say you are of the same opinion, that all they have to do is to continue firm, and to convince our gentry that they are really in earnest, and in time the greatest boaster among us will kiss the rod.

You asked me whether Colonel Lee, or as he is called here, General Lee,<sup>1</sup> turned Liberty Boy? I can from the best authority assure you, that the very first person he enquired for on his arrival here, was Mr. Samuel Adams, one of our Delegates, and the planner of all the measures of the rebels, though Hancock is the ostensible head; and that before he took any refreshment, he made Bracket, the tavern-keeper,<sup>2</sup> at whose house he first stopped, go with him to Adams' house, who not being at home, he returned to the tavern, where he was soon joined by Adams, with whom he was closeted two or three hours; and during the whole of his stay here, he was seldom, if ever, out of the company of one or other of our patriots, such as Adams, Young, Warren, Church,<sup>3</sup> and Hancock.

We are very badly off here for news-papers; all our printers, by interest or threats are restrained from publishing what should be generally known. The people hear nothing but what their ringleaders chuse they should hear; which is the principal reason for all the disturbances and commotions that have been raised here; and is also the reason for my having pressed you so strongly never to omit sending all the London papers that contain pieces in support of the Mother Country and of the legislative rights of Parliament.

<sup>1</sup> General Charles Lee, formerly an officer in the British army.

<sup>2</sup> Joshua Bracket kept the Cromwell's Head Tavern on School Street.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Thomas Young, Joseph Warren, Benjamin Church.

Captain Brown, in a ship from London, arrived at Salem, after the first of this month, the day the General Congress fixed for the commencement of the non-importation agreement, and after which no goods were to be imported from England. At first the people of Salem refused to allow the Captain to land any part of his cargo; but his owner John Rome, to whom most of the goods belonged, went to that town, and made his peace, at the expense of TWO HUNDRED DOLLARS; which sum the Salem Committee will *no doubt* remit to Boston, for the relief of the sorely oppressed inhabitants. In this manner have we begun to keep the solemn league, covenant, and association, *against* importing English goods.

*Extract of a letter from New York to a gentleman of the Excise Office, Dec. 16.<sup>1</sup>*

DEAR BROTHER,

The militia throughout America are now constantly exercised three times a week; a number of troops under the command of Gen. Gage have lately deserted; a few days since upwards of forty left the regiments they belonged to, taking with them their muskets, bayonets, &c. The soldiers in general at Boston live in great friendship with the inhabitants, and we have reason to think, on the day of trial, will not attempt to murder, in cold blood, the innocent people, who only want to defend their rights and privileges from the arbitrary measures of a despotic, unprincipled administration. But if some intelligence just received at this place may be depended on, they will too soon, to their sorrow, find better employment

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and Daily Advertiser*, Jan. 31, 1775.

for both their navy and army than cutting the throats of their American brethren. The Rainbow, Captain James Blanford, arrived here the day before yesterday from the Havannah, who informs us the Spaniards have twenty ships of war at that place, besides a considerable number of land forces, and you may be assured, when your weak-headed Ministry have sent their troops over to massacre the poor Americans, some important blow, which they little dream of, will be struck in some part of the West Indies. The Spaniards have not a port or harbour in any of their West India settlements but what is well garrisoned and some men of war in it, which are in extreme good condition.

*Authentic extract of a letter from a Merchant at Philadelphia to his Correspondent in London, dated Dec. 17, 1774.*<sup>1</sup>

We are waiting with great impatience to hear of the proceedings with regard to America.

If the late acts relating to Massachusetts Bay and other provinces are not repealed we are determined to follow the example of the other colonies, and to import no more goods from your country.

You cannot blame us for entering into this agreement — we are already over head and ears in debt, and from the restrictions laid upon our trade we have no prospect of being able to pay you.

It gives us great pain to find ourselves so much vilified in most of your London papers. — We glory in our connections with Great Britain, and we challenge any part of his Majesty's dominions to vie with us in loyalty and affection to the illustrious House of Hanover.

<sup>1</sup> *Bristol Gazette*, March 30, 1775.

Our province still groans under a burthen of debt contracted during the late war, which, though a successful one, produced advantages in which we were by no means the most considerable sharers.

Our lives as well as purses have always been at the service of the crown, when called for in a constitutional way. No plots to subvert government have ever been heard of in our land; we teach our children loyalty to our King, with the same breath with which we teach them to love and prize their liberty. None of our estates have ever been confiscated for rebellion. Jacobitish principles are unknown among us. Even those very persons who have been transported from your country to America for maintaining such principles too violently, have in a short time been transformed into good subjects, and firm friends to the present Royal Family. Such is the happy contagion of loyalty among us!

We hope the merchants in London will co-operate with us in our remonstrance for a redress of our grievances; if our petitions are again rejected, I am afraid we shall become desperate.<sup>1</sup> Everything around us at present wears the appearance of distress; we are heartily concerned to hear of your confusion at home. God avert the evils that threaten us! But at this period I see no prospect of it.

*Extract of a letter from an Officer at Boston, dated Dec. 17.<sup>2</sup>*

About three weeks ago we received accounts of the dissolution of Parliament. The Americans alledge,

<sup>1</sup> The London merchants had been particularly sympathetic with the American cause. In October the Continental Congress had sent an address to the people of England and one to the King.

<sup>2</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, Feb. 20, 1775.



that this was a trick of the Ministry to hinder the people from getting a free and uninfluenced House of Commons. Since the Scarborough arrived, it is known, that the Ministry are determined to pursue rigorous measures. The Americans in most of the Colonies have redoubled their diligence, and are preparing for war with the greatest alacrity. In this province they have established what they call *minutes* men, that is, a body of men ready to turn out and take the field at a minute's warning.

*Extract of a letter from Annapolis, Dec. 22.<sup>1</sup>*

In compliance with the recommendation of the deputies of the several counties of this province, at their late convention, to such of the Gentlemen, Freeholders, and other Freemen of this province, as are from 16 to 50 years of age, to form themselves into companies, and to chuse their officers, on Saturday last a number of citizens met, formed themselves into two companies, and chose their officers, agreeable to the recommendation.

The companies are composed of all ranks of men in this city, Gentlemen of the first fortunes are common soldiers; this example, it is not doubted, will be followed by every town and county in this province.

It is said that there are a sufficient number of citizens to form another company, which, it is hoped, will be immediately done.

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, March 9-11, 1775.



*The following letters from a Gentleman in America to a Member of the British Parliament may be depended on as authentic:*<sup>1</sup>

*Letter I*

The late proclamation forbidding the exportation of gunpowder and fire arms to America seemed intended to take away from the colonies the power of defending themselves by force. I think it my duty to inform you, that the said proclamation will be rendered ineffectual by a manufactory of gunpowder, which has lately been set on foot in this province, the materials of which may be procured in great perfection, and at an easier rate than they can be imported from Great Britain among ourselves. There are moreover gunsmiths enough in this province to make one hundred thousand stand of arms in one year, at 28s. sterling a-piece, if they should be wanted. It may not be amiss to make this intelligence as public as possible, that our rulers may see the impossibility of enforcing the late acts of parliament by arms. Such is the wonderful martial spirit which is enkindled among us, that we begin to think the whole force of Britain could not subdue us. We trust no less to the natural advantages of our country than to our numbers and military preparations, in the confidence and security of which we boast. The four New England colonies, together with Virginia and Maryland, are completely armed and disciplined. The province of Pennsylvania will follow their example in a few weeks. Our militia will amount to not less than 60,000 men.

Nothing but a total repeal of the acts of parliament of which we complain can prevent a civil war in Amer-

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, April 25-27, 1775.

ica. Our opposition has now risen to desperation. It would be as easy to allay a storm in the ocean, by a single word, as to subdue the free spirit of the Americans without a total redress of their grievances. May a spirit of wisdom descend at last upon our Ministry and rescue the British empire from destruction! We tremble at the thoughts of a separation from Great Britain. All our glory and happiness have been derived from you. But we are in danger of being shipwrecked upon your rocks. To avoid these, we are willing to be tossed, without a compass or a guide, for a while upon an ocean of blood.

Wishing you success in your disinterested labours to promote the happiness of this country, I am, Sir, with much esteem for your firmness, your most obedient humble servant.

*Philadelphia, Dec. 24, 1774.*

#### *Letter II*

In a letter which I wrote to you a few nights ago, I mentioned that the manufactories of gunpowder and fire arms, which were setting on foot in this country, would defeat the designs of the Ministry in forbidding the exportation of these articles from Great Britain. The only design of this letter is to rectify some mistakes which have been transmitted to England respecting the conduct of General Lee, who is now in America.

The Ministry have been made to believe that the military preparations in the colonies, have been recommended and taught entirely by that officer. Nothing can be farther from fact. The Americans were determined to seal their love of liberty with

their blood long before they heard of the name of Gen. Lee. The people of Massachusetts's Bay were armed and disciplined before Gen. Lee visited them, and the Congress agreed to recommend the study of the military exercises to the colonies without hearing a word upon that subject from the General. It is a falsehood that the General has offered to head our troops. He has too much knowledge of the world not to perceive that men, who fight for all they hold dear to them, will prefer men born among them for commanders, to the most experienced foreign officers. Moreover the colonies are not so wrapped up in Gen. Lee's military accomplishments as to give him the preference to Col. Putnam and Col. Washington, — men whose military talents and achievements have placed them at the head of American heroes. There are several hundred thousand Americans who would face any danger with these illustrious heroes to lead them. It is but just to Gen. Lee's merit to acknowledge that he has upon all occasions exposed the folly and madness of the present Administration, and has shewed the most tender regard to the liberties of this country. But in this he has acted the part of an Englishman. What is England without America? Her liberty and commerce, which are her two capital pillars, are both supported by this country.

There cannot be a greater error than to suppose that the present commotions in America are owing to the arts of demagogues. Every man thinks and acts for himself in a country where there is an equal distribution of property and knowledge. It is to no purpose to attempt to destroy the opposition to the omnipotence of parliament by taking off our Han-

cocks, Adams' and Dickinson.<sup>1</sup> Ten thousand patriots of the same stamp stand ready to fill their places. — Would to Heaven our rulers would consider these things in time! One more rash and unjust action on your side the water may divide us beyond the possibility of an union. For God's sake try to rouse up the ancient spirit of the nation. We love you — we honour you as brethren and fellow subjects. We have shared in your dangers and glories. Only grant us the liberty you enjoy, and we shall remain *one people*. Let the bond of our union be in the crown of Great Britain.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

*Philadelphia, Dec. 26.*

*Extract of a letter from a Gentleman of Distinction at Boston, dated Dec. 26.<sup>2</sup>*

In my last of the 9th inst. I acquainted you of the associations forming in several towns in the country by the friends of government, whom the factious party are pleased to call Tories, and themselves Whigs. I find by your letter, that it has been reported that we lose numbers, but I can assure you by the returns from the time of our arrival until the 24th inst. we have not lost 200 men by all the casualties an army is liable to; and many of those that did desert are returned to their colours notwithstanding the temptation they had to be debauched, and some have suffered death by the sentence of a general Court Martial. However, desertion is now at an end; our army are in high spirits, and at present this town is

<sup>1</sup> John Dickinson, of Philadelphia.

<sup>2</sup> *London Chronicle*, Feb. 7-9, 1775.



pretty quiet. We get plenty of provisions, cheap and good in their kind; we only regret that necessity obliges us to enrich, by purchasing from a set of people we would wish to deprive of so great an advantage. Our parade is a very handsome one; 370 men mount daily, and more expected soon; a Field Officer's Guard of 150 men at the lines on the neck; the Army is brigaded. The first Brigadier General Earl Percy, Major of Brigade Moncrieff, second Brigadier Pigot, M.B.<sup>1</sup> Small, third Brigadier Jones, M.B.<sup>1</sup> Hutchinson. I send you inclosed your friend Ruggles's <sup>2</sup> proposal of association; it has already disconcerted those factious gentry that style themselves whigs, though they are in reality rebels. I am glad to tell you that the back settlements in general disapprove of the non-importation resolves. You were right in your opinion! Brigadier General Ruggles of the Massachusetts, Colonel Babcock <sup>3</sup> of Rhode Island and Colonel Fetch of Connecticut, are staunch to government; the first, you know commanded and was the senior officer in the provincial service with us under Sir Jeffery Amherst; the other Gentlemen are at the head of the provincials. Most of their officers that served last war are ready to serve under their old Colonels. I make no doubt things will wear a new face here, especially when your sentiments of the Ministry's firmness are authenticated. Was I to give

<sup>1</sup> Major of Brigade.

<sup>2</sup> General Timothy Ruggles, a mandamus councillor who had taken refuge in Boston, proposed associations of Royalists throughout the country with constitutions binding the signers to oppose at risk of life the acts of all unconstitutional assemblies, such as committees and congresses. Force, *American Archives*, 4th Ser., 1, 1057.

<sup>3</sup> Colonel Henry Babcock.



you names of the different provincial field officers, &c. that have offered their service, this letter would be swelled to a volumn; you know them, and can answer for them. All your friends wish and expect to see you in the spring.

*Extract of a genuine letter to a gentleman from his friend at New York, Dec. 28, 1774.*<sup>1</sup>

I know you conceive America hardly treated, and will think perhaps the change in my sentiments, owing to my private interest being hurt by their proceedings; I grant you this is too often the case, but not in the present instance. I came to this place highly prepossessed in their favour, but find their behavior so mad, so inconsistent with that gratitude they owe Great Britain, that I have entirely changed my opinion of them, tho' at the same time I do not entirely side with Government in all their measures, yet by what I can understand of the matter, which (though little) is, I believe, as much as most people do, who make the greatest noise here, should the liberty side get the better, it will end in the destruction of the colonies, as New England only wants to grind the other provinces. Most sensible people here, people of property, whom I should suppose interested as much as any in the matter, are of this opinion, and say that one master is better than a thousand, and that they would rather be oppressed by a King than by a rascally mob. 'Tis not only reducing everybody to a level, but it is entirely reversing the matter, and making the mob their masters. This province, as it is less violent, is looked upon with an evil eye by

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and Daily Advertiser*, Feb. 2, 1775.

the rest, and with contempt called a Tory province; for in America, the distinction between Whigs and Tories prevail as much at present as ever it did in England. Every man who will not drink "destruction to his King," is a Tory, and liable to tar and feathers. In the east and southern provinces they are in actual rebellion, raising troops, and seizing ammunition in the most daring manner; the common people are mad, they only hear one side of the question, and believe they are oppressed because they are told so, which is all they know of the matter. As the fever is very high, a little bleeding is absolutely necessary. General Gage is by far too lenient in his measures, and had a few been killed at first, the rest would have been quiet; now multitudes must unavoidably suffer. Was the royal standard hoisted, thousands would flock to it, that are as yet afraid to declare their sentiments. It is expected in a little time, and should it happen before we quit the continent, I would not be the last to repair to it. If I must light a match, it shall be for King George. I do not wish it but I think I would not shun it.

*Extract of a letter from Annapolis, Dec. 31, 1774.*<sup>1</sup>

The people in general throughout these provinces are forming themselves into companies, under officers, who are instructing them in the art and manœuvres of war, and are as vigilant as though they daily expected the appearance of an enemy; and such an universal spirit of liberty (by some called faction) prevails, that I am of opinion many would sell their lives very dear. What will be the event of the contest, no one

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, Feb. 20, 1775.

knows. An universal stop to trade must undoubtedly take place. We have only to hope for the best — A Spanish war (which, a report prevails, there is likely to be) may be desired, hoping it will put an end to our feuds with each other.



1775





*The following advices from America, being extracts of letters from gentlemen of distinguished rank, veracity and character in Boston and Virginia, may be relied on as containing the most authentic information.*<sup>1</sup>

BOSTON, Jan. 3, 1775.

The officers of the army and their friends have carefully *concealed* the diminution of their forces by *death* and *desertion*; but it is well known that so great a number have died out of the *still-houses*, which were hired for barracks, as to occasion their being removed to other places; and by the number of deserters that have been seen and spoke with all over New England as well as to the Southward, there is great reason to believe there will be scarce enough left to mount guard when the season of action arrives.

The seamen on board the fleet are grown *mutinous*. One of them was *hanged* at the yard-arm a few days since; his body was sent by four men, who were thought trustworthy, in a boat to be buried in one of the islands, but they all ran off and left the corpse and the boat where they landed. One of the *navy officers* meeting with a land officer at K——x's shop,<sup>2</sup> told him, that on board all the ships *their* men had grown *so uneasy* and *tumultuous*, that it was with great difficulty he could govern them; upon which the land officer observed, that the uneasiness among the *sol-*

<sup>1</sup> *London Evening Post*, March 25–28, 1775. For the other letter referred to see letter dated Jan. 25, 1775, p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> Probably the bookshop of Henry Knox, who later escaped from Boston in disguise and became a trusted artillery officer under Washington.

*diers*, was full as great, *or greater*, than among the seamen. — With how much truth I cannot say, but it has been currently reported for this fortnight past, that *the arms of the tenth* regiment have been taken from them and locked up every night, and that the marines distributed in barracks in the North-End, have absolutely refused to do duty, as they are neither paid or fed according to contract. The discipline in both departments is so severe, and the duty and service so disagreeable, that the impatience both of seamen and soldiers is every day more and more visible and extensive, and it has been repeatedly hinted that many of the *officers*, as they become more acquainted with the merits of the cause they are engaged in, discover great uneasiness.

If it was certainly known, that an open rupture was to take place in the spring, there could not be more dilligence or greater application in studying the science of war than there is at present *throughout New England and through the Continent*, which surely must convince the *Ministry*, that not only an immense treasure, but rivers of blood must be expended before the spirits of free-born Americans can be made to submit to parliamentary taxation, and submissively bow their neck to the yoke of bondage their fellow-subjects in power have prepared for them.

*Extract of a letter from an Officer at Boston, dated Jan. 6.*<sup>1</sup>

We are here much in the same state as when I wrote you last. The fleet and army are very healthy; little or no desertion; things in general very moderate in price, and in great plenty; the only advance is upon

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, March 8–10, 1775.

beef and mutton, where it was least to be expected. The country people are muleish, and would wish to distress us; but all those concerned in trade readily part with whatever they can command for money. We have very great plenty of wine, rum, beer, and all other drinkables at prices much lower than you would imagine; for example, rum at 14d. sterling a gallon, or 4d. by the single quart; good port wine for 10d. a bottle; very good cyder for 1d. halfpenny a gallon, and beer very cheap, but scarce any body will drink it. The greatest difficulty is to find money, for exchange is become very unfavourable to the Drawers; it is extremely hard upon the Officers of the army; they at present lose 7 l. 10s. upon every 200 l. they draw for, and it is expected to be at double that discount in less than a month; and were we to come to blows with the Americans, our little army must disband for want of cash to pay them, for there is none, or next to none, in the military chest; and in case of hostilities, bills would not procure any, for credit would be at an end.

*Letter from Boston, Jan. 16.*<sup>1</sup>

Our insurgents are making great preparations for opening their rebellion in the Spring with a numerous body of troops. They are inlisting men and raising money in most of the towns and counties of the Province. Our Provincial Congress will meet in a fortnight, when it is expected they will declare the General and the new Councillors enemies to the Province, will summon the former to ship himself off with the troops, and the latter to resign their new dignity, or depart along with the General. The rebels, whom we

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, March 1, 1775.

see here, do not at present threaten so bloodily, and put on such desperate airs as they did two months ago, and I have not yet persuaded myself that they ever will fight. General Ruggles's association for opposing the rebels has been signed by great numbers in different parts of the country, more particularly in the county of Worcester, where the rebels have set up their headquarters. The Rebel Committee of the town of Petersham, in that county, about the beginning of this month, summoned Mr. Willard and many others, who had associated against the rebels, to come before them; several of the gentlemen attended, and when questioned concerning their association, openly avowed it, and declared it was their firm determination to resist with force of arms every attempt that should be made by the rebels, either on their persons or properties. The Rebel Committee were so frightened at this bold and unexpected declaration, that they durst not proceed to any outrages; they contented themselves with excommunicating a dozen or two of the associaters by name in the public prints, calling them traiterous parricides, and many other abusive names. Sir William Pepperel has been anathematized likewise for refusing to resign his seat in the Council; his tenants have been commanded to leave his farms, and all people at their peril forbid to hire any of them. I do not hear that any of the tenants have obeyed. The rebels of Marble-head have voted 585 l. sterling as a fund to pay a body of troops to fight for New England independency; this day they have printed a number of votes and opinions; amongst others they say that by advancing their taxes 50 l. per cent. they will be able to defray all expences of the



war; and that it is better to suffer heavy taxes for a short time to secure their freedom, than to submit to Britain and to pay heavy taxes forever. In this town we are very violent in words, but I fancy we shall not come to action. We have, however, to keep up our spirits, just sent forth a thundering Resolve: the Select-men and the rest of the rebels, offended at the noise of the army, drums and fifes, have declared all such noises a public nuisance, and have directed the peace officers to seize all persons so offending as disturbers of the peace, and to keep them for trial. If the rebels really intend to fight, this is an infallible method of raising a disturbance and bringing on an engagement, without having the appearance of a direct attack on the troops. I shall never believe our traitors will fight till I see them. Yet we want three times the number of troops we have at present; those we have are only sufficient to protect the friends of the Mother Country from being tarred and feathered and their property plundered. Many shocking violences have been perpetrated in the country. There is no sort of violence that they do not commit; their outrages, though dreadful, have had some good effects; they are now detested by all sober people; many who once thought them sincere, and wished them well, seeing their enormities, are associating against them. But there never will be peace in this country till their ringleaders and head Committeemen are seized. All their leaders are poor miscreants, who could not live in affluence but in times of commotion; having nothing to lose by the disturbances, they exert themselves to keep up and increase them; and they think it always in their power whenever there

shall be any real danger to abscond into the back country; and it is this belief of their safety that makes them so daring. I do not know one man of real property who is earnest in this rebellious cause. Mr. Bowdoin, who was long at their head, shrunk back when he saw their madness, and would not go to the Philadelphian Congress,<sup>1</sup> though chosen a Delegate. The late Chairman of the Provincial Congress<sup>2</sup> had a great fortune ten years ago; but he is weak almost to idiotism, and has been a prey to hypocritical flatterers and vultures ever since the Stamp Act: never was poor wretch so plucked and plundered by his bosom friends: he is an object of commiseration, notwithstanding all the villainies he has been led to countenance. We have lately lost by death one William M——,<sup>3</sup> a most notorious knave. You may send as many troops and ships as you please, and enforce a submission; but, as I have often repeated to you, this country never will be quiet till these vermin our Committee-men are seized and brought to trial, for it is the idea of their own safety that makes them push on their deluded countrymen to rebellion. You have now two of them in London, against whom the most damning proofs can be brought.

<sup>1</sup> James Bowdoin. Mrs. John Adams wrote to her husband of Mr. Bowdoin in June 15, 1775, "He, poor gentleman, is so low that I apprehend he is hastening to a house not made with hands; he looks like a mere skeleton, speaks faint and low, is racked with a violent cough, and, I think, far advanced in a consumption." *Familiar Letters*, p. 63. See letter dated Dec. 21, 1775, Boston, p. 242.

<sup>2</sup> John Hancock.

<sup>3</sup> William Molineau, a merchant of Boston and an ardent patriot.

*Extract of a letter from Charles-Town, South Carolina,  
January 17.<sup>1</sup>*

Our Provincial Congress rose this day after sitting seven successive days, Sunday not excepted. They have unanimously approved the proceedings of the Continental Congress, and have shut up the courts of law. Parties run so high here, or rather a very great majority being of one opinion, that it is dangerous for the friends of government (who are very few in number) to speak or write their sentiments. We however hope that the lenity, justice, and moderation of the British Parliament will be able to quiet the minds of the people, and restore us to peace and tranquility. We are looking out, with anxious expectations, for the King's speech,<sup>2</sup> which, we hope, will recommend such prudent and conciliatory measures as will be the means of again restoring us to the harmony with our mother country, which it is so much the interest of Britain and America always to preserve.

*The following advices from America, being extracts of letters from gentlemen of distinguished rank, veracity and character in Boston and Virginia, may be relied on as containing the most authentic information.<sup>3</sup>*

Boston, Jan. 25, 1775.

The soldiers try all they can to spread the *smallpox*, but I hope they will be disappointed. One of their officers inoculated his whole family without letting

<sup>1</sup> *London Evening Post*, March 23-25, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> The King's speech at the opening of Parliament, Nov. 30, 1774.

<sup>3</sup> *London Evening Post*, March 25-28, 1775.

any person know it, — there were a man, his wife, and seven children, under the same roof, and not one of them ever had it. It is very prevalent among the soldiers, there has been three buried every day for this month past.

Two nights successively in the last week there were frays with the officers: two of them that were drunk insulted the watch; the guard was sent for; the Captain of which was also drunk, and ordered them to fire on about a dozen of people that were collected on hearing the noise; but the Select-men went to the General, and he sent one of the Aid de Camp who prevented any mischief ensuing from that fray. The officers are to be tried to-day before three Justices of the Peace. The General sent his Aid de Camp and rummaged all the officers out of the taverns that night, and he has since ordered a proclamation to be read to the army, forbidding any officer to be out after ten o'clock, and a soldier after eight. These orders, though absolutely necessary, have enraged the officers to a great degree; three of them (that board with Perkins, the chair maker) yesterday said, they were determined never to go out without loaded pistols: — Well, uncle Perkins, says one of them, it wont be long before we shall have the *flesh* of this people to dung our lands with. This you may depend upon for a fact.

*Extract of a letter from Norfolk, Virginia, January 30.*<sup>1</sup>

You will see by our public papers, the melancholy state of these colonies. The gentlemen, who stile themselves Whigs and Patriots, carry every thing

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, March 18, 1775.



with a high hand, while those of more moderate principles, especially in this Province, [do not] dare to avow them. Our Governor <sup>1</sup> is at present here with his Lady. He has brought with him four Indian Chiefs, who were delivered to him at the conclusion of the war as hostages for the due performance of the articles of peace. They are stout copper-colored fellows, of bold countenance, and finely dressed in the Indian fashion, with trinkets at their nose, ears, &c. They walk'd in procession through the town with the Governor, and have been genteelly entertained by the gentlemen of the town, as well as on board his Majesty's ship where, without scruple, they slept all night.

*Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Charles Town, dated  
Feb. 2, 1775.<sup>2</sup>*

As to American affairs, the people seem now more determined than ever to oppose what they think are illegal encroachments on their liberty and privileges, as distant British subjects. Within a fortnight a very full Provincial Congress was held in this Town, consisting of Deputies from every County and Parish in South-Carolina; who determined to adhere to the Resolutions of the General Continental Congress, and scorned the permission that was then granted them, to export rice; which article, I believe will be given up at the general American Congress, which is to be held at Philadelphia in May next. The same Deputies who attended the Congress there in September last are again rechosen.

<sup>1</sup> John Murray, Earl of Dunmore.

<sup>2</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, March 31–April 3, 1775.



Last night a vessel arrived here from Salem, by which it is reported that a regiment there had mutinied and laid down their arms. If this be true, probably others will follow their example; for, to generous spirits, such an unnatural war must be altogether disgusting.

*The following is the genuine copy of a letter received by a tradesman at York from his son, who deserted from a regiment at Boston, and is now settled at Charles Town, South Carolina.*<sup>1</sup>

CHARLES TOWN, Feb. 3, 1775.

*Honoured Father,*

From the tender affection you always professed for me, your unworthy child, I can easily conceive the pangs your heart must have felt at my long but involuntary silence; know then, that I am now as happy and *free* as I could wish; unless being denied the liberty of returning to my native land, for the pleasure of seeing you, and convincing you that I have lived over my days of folly. How I came to this place it is necessary to inform you. After our regiment arrived at *Boston*, I found my wretched situation made so much worse by confinement (although I had obtained a halbert) that I resolved to take the first opportunity of leaving my colours; it was a considerable time before I could do it with safety; at last, with the assistance of a young fellow from Shields, I effected my escape; but the fatigue I suffered for the first days, from a hurry of spirits, and the labour of walking, is as much beyond my abilities to describe, as is the infinite joy I felt the second day, when I found myself

<sup>1</sup> *London Evening Post*, April 11-13, 1775.

once more possessed of *liberty* and safety. The hospitable kindness I received from the country people, in my way from Boston to this place, is beyond my description; if I could have rode an hundred horses I might have had them; every man that owned one offered him to me, and all brought me out their best fare. Before I knew these people, I was shocked at the thought of being sent out to *cut their throats*, and resolved not to turn human butcher, for it is no better, to destroy my *friends* and *countrymen*. Now I know them, I find them the best hearted, generous people in the world, ready to give everything to strangers. I am now down at Charles Town, and have several engagements offered me, to be clerk on different plantations, but I intend accepting a plot of land that is offered me, some distance from this town, where the gentlemen have proposed to build me a house, give me some tools, and lend me some negroes to settle. Whatever you may think of negroes, I assure you they live better than the greatest part of the poor in England do at present; I have three shillings a day allowed me from the province, with ten invitations in a day to dinner. We hear several regiments are coming out; if that is true, they can do nothing in this country. I understand it is determined to oppose them, though that will be unnecessary, for there were not three men in my company who would fire on the people of this country; I am sure there was not one *Englishman* or *Irishman* that would do so; be assured, if the army moves up the country, they will soon want a number of recruits, as all the men know they can change a life of *beggary*, as well as *slavery*, for *liberty*, and have a portion of land forever. This

climate seems rather too warm, but it is beyond imagination, pleasant: we have had one thunder storm here that would have terrified your whole city. — The people here that know most, tell me their troubles will soon be over, and that some of the great men at home must suffer, and then there will be pardon for all deserters; when that happens, I shall certainly come once more to Old England, to see my aged parents and dearest friends, but I believe the settlement I shall make here will make me resolve to return.

*A letter from Philadelphia, dated Feb. 6.<sup>1</sup>*

I have just seen the King's Speech to his new Parliament; it portends no good to America, far less to Great Britain. If Americans are deemed *mad*, I hope Great Britain will show them an example of wisdom and moderation on this occasion. The Parliamentary high claim of *supreme authority* over all the dominions of the Crown, is totally incompatible with that freedom Americans should enjoy, according to the British constitution; nor can it, by any means, be supported by coercive measures. Would to God our brethren in Great Britain would manifest a *willingness* to exercise *that power* over us consistent with our rights as a free people. Americans never will submit to an unconstitutional, slavish subordination to their fellow subjects, nor, indeed, ought government to require it. Desperation will otherwise be the deplorable consequence. Are there no wise *heads* and honest hearts in Britain able and willing to draw the *true line*, and thereby heal the breach ere it be too late? or, is the nation, at all events, determined to pursue their

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, April 4, 1775.

*infatuated scheme*, to the ruin and destruction of one or both states? For my part, I tremble for the consequence; I can only look up to the Supreme Disposer of all human events for his timely interposition, and mercifully preventing the two nations, so nearly allied and closely connected by mutual interest, from embreuing their hands in each others blood! which, however, will never settle the matter, even should Great Britain subdue the Colonies; for even then it would be *impossible* to govern the Americans otherwise than on the generous principles of constitutional liberty; nay, I do aver, it would not be the interest of Great Britain, independent of any other consideration, so to rule over them.

*Extract of a letter from New Haven, Feb. 7.<sup>1</sup>*

A man lately went from Hartford to New York to buy the town stock of powder, and as he was bringing it up by land, it was seized by a King's officer, an account of which got to Hartford last Saturday night, whereupon about twenty eight persons immediately set out, well armed, in order to rescue it, and they arrived here towards Sabbath-day morning; they proceeded as far as Fairfield, and there they got it, for it was seized at Stanford; and the Fairfield people had rescued it before the Hartford people had got there. They arrived here last night with the powder, and I suppose have set out for Hartford with it to day. They had an attachment for the officer who seized it, and they intend to take and put him in gaol for trial; whether they have effected it or not I am not certain.

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, March 28, 1775.



*The following is an extract of a letter from a gentleman at Colchester in Virginia, to his friend in Edinburgh, dated Feb. 9.*<sup>1</sup>

If the American acts are repealed I shall expect the goods I ordered; but if the acts are not repealed, by no means send the goods, as the Americans stand firm to the resolves of the Congress. All the counties in Virginia are forming companies of men, and committees are daily meeting who distress those merchants who sell goods at a higher rate than before the non-importation scheme took place. Tobacco will be very high this spring: it has already risen considerably.

*Extract of a letter from Newport, Rhode Island, Feb. 13.*<sup>2</sup>

We are informed there was but one Tory in all New Shoreham on the 30th of January, at which time the sons of liberty had a meeting, and requested him to renounce his wicked principles; but he refusing they began to enquire for some tar and feathers, which not being ready at hand, they took some fish gurry and made a beginning to give him a new coat, upon which he frankly confessed he was no Tory, had acted only from a spirit of opposition, and despised and hated a real Tory as much as he did a highway robber or the devil, their principles and practices being exactly similar, and tending to the same end, viz. that of plundering and enslaving mankind. He promised to support the liberties of his country for the future, and was taken into the favour of his townsmen.

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, March 29, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> *London Chronicle*, April 1-4, 1775.



*Extract of a letter from Boston, Feb. 16.<sup>1</sup>*

We are informed, that last Friday the Mayor of New-York, assisted by some Aldermen and civil officers, and a number of Tories, in all about three hundred, attempted to prevent the return of a Glasgow ship then in the harbour, which ship arriving after the first of February, was, according to the association of the Grand American Continental Congress, to have returned from whence she came without breaking bulk. The people, to the amount of about four hundred, insisted on her departure, and a skirmish ensued, in which the Mayor and his party were worsted, and his Worship dragged through the streets.<sup>2</sup> We are further informed, that the ship, being furnished with necessaries, was ordered to sail in half an hour. The Captain sailed as far as the Hook, where he and his hands left her, but others being procured, she proceeded on her voyage.

*A private letter from a gentleman at Boston, dated Feb. 19, 1775,<sup>3</sup> says,*

The Admiral issued press-warrants at Marblehead on account of the detention of some wax-candles imported for his own use, and which were seized by the Committee of Inspection. At first the people of Marblehead had determined on rescuing any pressed men; accordingly, after Mr. Leichmere, Lieut. of the Lively, had pressed two hands from on board a vessel coming in, on his return he was surrounded by eight

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, March 29, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> According to an account given in Force, *American Archives*, 4th Ser., 1, 1243, Captain Watson was conducted through the principal streets of the city, followed by a great crowd, and forced on board his ship.

<sup>3</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, April 8, 1775.

or ten whale-boats manned and armed; he called to them at their peril to keep off, which they did at a distance of two boats lengths; they then asked him if he had pressed any men out of the vessel he had boarded, which he answered in the affirmative; they bid him deliver them up without making any resistance; on his refusal, they pointed their pieces into his boat, and Mr. L ——— ordered his men to do the same; one of the impressed men took this opportunity and leaped overboard; Mr. Leichmere snapped his piece at the man, which missed fire, and he was taken up by the whale-boats; the other man was immediately secured, and without farther opposition carried on board the *Lively*. From this time they continued pressing without molestation, when the Select-men of Marblehead seeing their trade distressed, obliged the Committee of Inspection to write to Admiral Graves, in the most penitential manner, for having disobliterated him, and laid the blame entirely on their Chairman, which the Admiral took not the least notice of. The Select-men were obliged to wait on him, and promised to return the candles, and pay all costs and damages, and there should never be in future any cause of complaint. Lo! their prayers were heard, and the press-warrants ordered to be withdrawn, as soon as they had satisfied the purser, whom one of the Committee waited upon, and paid him betwixt four and five pounds to defray the expence he had been at in going to demand them, and told him the candles were at Mr. ——— house, and would be delivered on his sending for them; this the purser refused, and insisted on their being laid within the threshold of his door, which was punctually complied with.

*Extract of a letter from a Gentleman on board the Fleet at Boston, dated February 20, 1775, to his Brother in London.*<sup>1</sup>

You will expect news of the Americans; by the newspapers you will have the earliest and best intelligence, but I should deviate too much from the character of an Englishman not to touch on politics.

The leading men, I mean those called patriots, have taken every measure to keep up the spirit of the people. Mankind in general are very jealous of any innovation in their religion; of this the leaders have taken the advantage, and impressed on the minds of the people a belief that the Romish is going to be established in America by an act of Parliament; that they have begun with Canada, and intend to introduce it among the rest of the Colonies. This the lowest class verily believe, and the more substantial yeomanry are so prejudiced by party, that anything asserted by a Whig, they take it for granted is so, without enquiring any further about the matter.

I have been frequently in the country, and had many opportunities of conversing with the country people; "*they say we had sooner die than be made slaves; it is a pity the King of England was turned Papist,*" and a great deal of such stuff. When I assured them to the contrary, they seemed surprized at my talking in that manner, and were quite enraged. "*What (said they) do you know better than the newspapers? are we not to believe what they tell us?*" It was with a great deal of difficulty I could get them appeased; they called me Tory, a name as dangerous to

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, March 30, 1775.

the person so aspersed, as mad dog to the canine species in England.

In their churches the Gospel is laid aside for politics, and nothing is more common than their offering up prayers for the destruction of the navy and army.

I have talked with their patriots; they will not allow Great Britain to have any right whatever over the Colonies, and seem determined to shake off all connection with her. I was told by one of their principal leaders, that they waited for nothing but the Canadians to join them in the grand rebellion, (as he called it) to declare themselves independant.

They have begun to enforce the resolves of the Continental Congress in different parts of the country. At Salem they are selling a cargo imported since the 1st of December; the owners will be paid the first cost and charges, and the surplus, if any, to be distributed to such of the inhabitants of the town of Boston as are sufferers by the Port Bill.

Mr. —, purser of the Preston, imported some wax candles for the Admiral's use, by a vessel from England, which arrived at Marblehead; a Committee of Inspection seized them. The purser went to demand them; the Chairman told him the candles should be immediately given up on his paying a few coppers duty; this he refused, and they kept possession of the candles.

About a week ago the Tory inhabitants of Marshfield, a seaport town about thirty miles to the Southward of this place, sent to General Gage for assistance against the Whigs, who threatened to assemble and burn their houses. The General sent them a detach-



ment of 100 men, by sea. The Minute Men, or Yanky Militia, were turned out to oppose their landing, but seeing the regulars resolute, thought proper to disperse.<sup>1</sup>

It is a difficult matter to form a right judgment how matters will end; the opinion of the most intelligent men is, that the Americans will not be brought to reason till their ports are shut up. Garrison every seaport town, which will be the readiest way of settling matters, after securing some of their principal leaders; this, and the army's not marching any distance in the country, will be the only means of avoiding the horrid effects of a civil war.

The people are ready for mischief, but are in want of both expert leaders and discipline; as an instance of the latter, about twenty miles from Boston, the militia, in saluting the Colonel, shattered his legs in so terrible a manner that they were both obliged to be cut off, and he died under the operation.

Desertion no longer prevails among the troops, nor do they meet with that encouragement to desert as they did soon after their arrival; the common people are tired of treating them according to their first plan, as brothers; they now consider them as enemies, indeed they ever held them in that light, but under a mask which they have now laid aside. The troops for these two months past have marched from five to ten miles into the country; I have been the different routs they took, and saw the effigies of soldiers in their regimentals hanging by the road side. You may judge of the effect this will have on the army, who wish for nothing so much as a skirmish with the Yankeys, to

<sup>1</sup> See letter dated March 1, 1775, Boston, p. 70.



revenge the many affronts already offered them. Perhaps you will think me too prolix on this subject, therefore conclude. Yours, &c.

*Extract of a letter from Boston, dated March 1, to a Gentleman of Salisbury.*<sup>1</sup>

The winter hath been uncommonly mild, (indeed milder than I ever remember in England) and my health extremely good. The final determination of the British Parliament is expected here with great impatience. If it should be spirited, matters will soon be accommodated to the satisfaction of the friends of government. The factious heads of the cabals already betray sym[p]toms of fear and cowardice; and the Tories lift up their heads, and declare their real sentiments. The first persons on the Continent in affluence and principles of integrity and honour, when once assured of protection, will testify their abhorrence of the late rebellious proceedings; and are forming associations for this purpose. Their appetite for fighting did not appear to be very violent on General Gage's lately sending a detachment of 150 men (commanded by Capt. Balfour) at the request of the loyal part of the inhabitants of a town 35 miles from hence, to protect them from outrages threatened by a large body from the whole county. One of the minute men (so called from being supposed to be always ready for action) told the Captain they should not land; "I'll try that," says he: whereupon the fellow said, they were bold men; and walked off: since which the town hath been as quiet as Boston. The Republican party think the Royal speech a bitter

<sup>1</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, April 29, 1775.

pill; though the protesting Lords have gilded it. Many excellent pamphlets have been lately published here, and at New-York, which have partly had their wished for effect, in opening the eyes of many misguided persons. It is impossible to give you a better description of the bulk of the people on this Continent (and particularly in the province of Massachusetts Bay) than every English history gives of the principles of the Independents in Oliver's time. There their pictures are justly drawn.

*A letter from New York, dated March 27,<sup>1</sup> says,*

There has been a great riot in Cumberland county, on the holding one of the inferior Courts. The rioters, in number 500, seized the Judge, Justices, Sheriff, Clerk, and many of their friends, and sent out parties, and laid hold of all persons they suspected not to be of their party. They would have put them all to death, but could not agree on the manner of doing it. The persons seized have been rescued by a party from New Hampshire, and committed to jail at that place, escorted by a party of the rioters.<sup>2</sup> No person is suffered to travel in Cumberland county without a pass, signed by a Committee of the rioters.

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, March 31.<sup>3</sup>*

Every thing amongst us is quiet, but regular trainings go on in New England, Maryland, and Virginia, and a determined spirit of opposition every where

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, May 5, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> The riots took place early in March. The persons seized were conveyed to the jail of Northampton in Massachusetts Bay.

<sup>3</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, May 1-3, 1775.

prevails; should the Ministry persist in pursuing forcible measures, the Americans will certainly be embodied, and act, at least, on the defensive; their numbers and situation will give them great advantages, but success on either side will be dreadful, as the thought of Englishmen spilling each others blood must be shocking to every lover of his country. How strangely infatuated are your Ministry! They may lose every thing, but can gain nothing by the contest; should they conquer for the present, it will cost them infinitely more to preserve their superiority than they will acquire by Taxes; they will teach us to despise the English nation, and a few years more will put it forever out of their power to keep us in subjection — a time will come, when, as the good Bishop of St. Asaph says, ‘they may think themselves happy in the habit of commanding;’ but if they break the bonds of affection, that habit will be no more.

*By a letter from Philadelphia, dated April 3.<sup>1</sup>*

It will not do (says this correspondent) to quarrel with us; we grow very strong here, we can do very well without you, for all sorts of mechanics are come hither, insomuch that we are crowded with foreigners from all parts of Europe, which has enhanced the value of almost every commodity. ————— I desire you not to send any thing; nothing is allowed to be unshipped, not so much as a small parcel; even presents must go back. Mr. M. has had some porter sent to him, but it was not suffered to be brought ashore. Our politicks are all settled, we now appear composed, and are very busy in knitting cotton stock-

<sup>1</sup> *London Evening Post*, May 25-27, 1775.

ings; I intend to send you a pair as a testimony of our patriotic zeal.

*Extract of a letter from a Gentleman, dated Second River in New York, April 10, to his friend in Newcastle.<sup>1</sup>*

Expecting to have had the pleasure of communicating some agreeable occurrences, made me defer writing till now; but as things remain at present, we seem rather to have our eyes fixed on your metropolis, for the determination of the legislative body now assembled there. For whatever some people may think or say to the contrary, I am bold to say, that, next to the Almighty power, *they* are our grand bulwark, and must support us against those sons of violence who have lately usurped an authority which they have no more judgement to manage than they had right to usurp; but I hope all will soon be settled on its proper basis, for the mob seem to be coming to their senses, seeing the tyranny that was likely to take place instead of lawful government; several judicious pieces frequently of late being printed in one of the weekly papers, besides sundry well wrote pamphlets, which I hope will have the desired effect. We are all quiet in our neighbourhood, every one using such articles as he chooseth without let or hindrance; for you'll please to observe, that the Congress and Committee Men lay restrictions, and those that are found to disobey, are stigmatized in the news-papers as betrayers and enemies of their country, and their property so found destroyed; to instances of which that happened lately, and not many miles from this place, I'll give two to make you laugh. The Committee search-

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, June 28, 1775.



ing for tea, found some with a poor woman; they seized it and proceeded with some ceremony and exultation before the house, to destroy it by fire; but wanting fire, one of them went to get some; the woman had contrived to get a kettle of hot water, which she freely threw about his shoulders, so that I believe he and his associates will behave with more caution in future. The other was in the same country; a pedlar had a few pamphlets, which they thought he ought not to sell, being a friendly address to the people in behalf of government; they made the man relinquish his property, acknowledge he was wrong, and that he was sorry for his error; but this was not enough, they made him write a letter to the purpose, which being printed and the books burned, saved their tar and feathers, and the man was dismissed. *Is not this liberty?*

*Extract of a letter from Newport, Rhode Island, April 12, 1775, to a Tradesman in Whitehaven.*<sup>1</sup>

One Col. Gilbert,<sup>2</sup> a high Prerogative man in Boston Government, about thirty miles from hence, with sixty or seventy of his neighbours, armed himself; they agreed to defend themselves from the insults of the Sons of Liberty; but some Militia men, zealous in the Cause, went in chase of them. The Colonel took refuge on board a man of war in this harbour. The others, except twenty, made their escape; these twenty are now confined in Providence Gaol, where they were conducted yesterday evening. — What will be the event, time must discover.

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, June 16–19, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> Colonel Thomas Gilbert of Freetown, Massachusetts Bay.



*Part of a letter from Virginia, April 16.<sup>1</sup>*

We have had no arrivals from any part of England since the ship which brought your last; from whence we conclude they are all waiting for the determination of Parliament with respect to the great question, whether we are to be dragooned or not? By a Scotch vessel lately arrived we hear, the Parliament is determined on force; this has put us in a situation which our General Congress in one of their resolves supposed might happen, and under such circumstances bid us prepare — *for mournful events*. We shall therefore in a few weeks have about 8000 volunteers (about 1500 of which are horse) all completely equipped at their own expence, and you may depend are as ready to face death in defence of their civil and religious liberty as any men under heaven. These volunteers are but a small part of our militia; we have in the whole about 100,000 men. The New-England provinces have at this day 50,000 of as well trained soldiers as any in Europe, ready to take the field at a day's warning, it is as much as the more prudent and moderate among them can do, to prevent the more violent from crushing General Gage's little army. But I still hope there is justice and humanity, wisdom and sound policy, sufficient in the British nation to prevent the fatal consequences that must inevitably follow the attempting to force by violence the tyrannical acts of which we complain. It must involve you in utter ruin, and us in great calamities, which I pray heaven to avert, and that we may once more shake hands in cordial affection as we have hitherto done, and as brethren ought ever to do.

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, June 1-3, 1775.

*Extract of an authentic Letter from an Officer of the Army at Boston, to a Friend in London, dated April 20, 1775.*<sup>1</sup>

General Gage detached a party of the troops, under the command of Lieut. Col. Smith, to destroy a magazine of military stores, which the Provincials had formed at Concord, about 18 miles from this town. It was my lot to be one of the party. We were soon discovered upon our march, and the Country raised an alarm. Nothing material happened till we were within six miles of the object of our destination; but here a body of the rebels opposed us, and gave the first fire,<sup>2</sup> which was immediately returned, with some effect, by the troops, and the rebels dispersed. When we came to Concord, the commanding officer assured the Inhabitants that they need be under no apprehensions of injury to their persons and properties, and the troops behaved with the utmost lenity, though the people were very sulky, and many of them very surly without provocation. One fellow had the impudence to strike Major Pitcairne, of the Marines, while searching for the stores according to his orders. We demolished and destroyed every thing of that sort we could find. Upon our return we were fired upon from every house, barn, ditch, hill, and place that afforded cover; and though the whole Country about us was raised, and they had every superiority which numbers and the knowledge of places could give them, the rebels never made one gallant or manly attempt upon us. When our ammunition was nearly

<sup>1</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, June 17, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> For a full discussion of the matter of the first fire, as well as of other mooted points in this first encounter between the British and the Colonial troops, see Murdock, *The Nineteenth of April*, and Coburn, *The Battle of the 19th of April, 1775*.

exhausted, Lord Percy came up with his Brigade and two pieces of cannon very opportunely to our relief. These scowered them, and kept them more at a distance. The rebels fought like the savages of the country, and treated some, that had the misfortune to fall, like savages, for they scalped and cut off their ears with the most unmanly barbarity.<sup>1</sup> This has irritated the troops to a very high degree; and if in future contests they should meet with some severities from them, they may thank themselves. We got Boston in the evening, much fatigued with the march and duty of the day, and with as little loss as could have been expected. We have about 60 killed, 150 wounded, and between 20 and 30 missing.<sup>2</sup> Only one commissioned officer is among the slain. The country is collecting together, and there are some thousands within a little distance of the town, which, it is said, they threaten to attack. The army is preparing for them. The troops conducted themselves throughout with the greatest coolness and intrepidity.

*Extract of a Letter from on Board the Fleet at Boston to a Friend in England, dated Boston Harbor, April 21, 1775.<sup>3</sup>*

Alas! I grieve to remit the account, which the fatal 19th of April produced in this miserable and oppressed country; a scene too black for human sight! I now feel, how you in particular will bleed, and how posterity will lament at the recital of these misfor-

<sup>1</sup> As the Provincials were pursuing the Regulars across the bridge at Concord a young man killed a British soldier with a hatchet as he was attempting to rise from the ground. This fact gave rise to the report that the Americans were scalping the wounded.

<sup>2</sup> General Gage's amended report stated that there were 73 killed, 174 wounded, and 26 missing. Murdock, *The Nineteenth of April*, p. 99.

<sup>3</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, June 17, 1775.

tunes, the peculiar woes of this devoted and unhappy country (I cannot say, with those I converse with here, *deluded people*). On the 18th, in the night, the grenadiers and light infantry of the different regiments landed from the boats of the fleet opposite to the back part of Boston, with orders to seize some cannon, about 18 miles from thence; and to disperse any men, or bodies of men, that they might find under arms. Within a few miles of the end of their march, they discovered some people of the country exercising. Some altercation arising, upon Col. Smith's giving orders for them to lay down their arms, the troops were fired on: this alarm in a few hours brought together upwards of two thousand men, which encreased as the day advanced. The King's troops were in possession of the town of Concord some hours, during which time the Americans had divided, and taken to the woods, to cut them off in their return to the camp. The retreat was ordered and began: but had not Lord Percy come up with a brigade to their relief (for then they had but two rounds remaining), they must have been all cut off: indeed it is the opinion of every body, that not a man would have escaped. There were some cruelties exercised on both sides; and a little time after the action had begun, the soldiers finding two of their men wounded, scalped, and without ears, irritated them to a fury of madness, and they then plundered and committed every wanton wickedness that a brutal revenge could stimulate, which their officers should blush they did not prevent. This party, which retreated to Charles Town, opposite the peninsula of Boston, were brought to the town in the boats of the



fleet, and about three regiments embarked that night, and landed in the same place; they were also yesterday relanded in the Town of Boston. The provincials are now encamped betwixt Boston and Roxborough, within musket-shot of each other, and it is the place which we believe will be the first demolished.

*The following letters were received by a very respectable gentleman here, from his friend at Boston.<sup>1</sup>*

*Letter I*

BOSTON, 11th April, 1775.

Dear Sir,

When I last wrote I informed you I purposed to see London, unless our troubles had an end; but now that I am fully informed of the cursed steps they intend to take, I am utterly at a loss what to determine. To leave my wife and children in this garrison, is what I can't think of, and to take up arms myself is what I am greatly averse to; but if I can get a safe retreat for my family, and secure my effects from the ravages of an insolent soldiery, I think I shall pay you a visit. Was I to attempt a description of our situation, and could give you but a faint idea of the distress of the women of this capital, it would grieve the heart of Humanity; for add to the immediate expectation of blood and carnage, the insolent behavior of the officers, who take all opportunities to shew themselves, not the patens of politeness, once the characteristic of a British soldier, but the standards of insolence and debauchery, and (some few excepted) are continually sporting with the miseries of this greatly abused peo-

<sup>1</sup> *London Evening Post*, June 15-17, 1775.



ple, though they prove themselves destitute of true courage and conduct; for they dare not attack, unless their numbers are superior, and then always come off second best. The General is a cool dispassionate man, and I think behaves with great propriety. Some of his officers want to cut the Yankees to pieces, as they term it; but I trust in God, if it comes to blows, these puppies will get such a drubbing as they deserve. Time must bring forth; I believe, although wretches in this town have been continually writing the contrary, that the Yankees will face the red coats, and I hope beat them too. I should still hope for peace, if I had not full assurance that Lord North, and the majority of Parliament, were possessed with a daemon. If they are not blind to the true interest of the Kingdom, and if these their cursed proceedings don't involve the nation in the utmost distress, I am mistaken. The people on this side the water (a wretched few excepted) are determined; they have no idea of giving up. The preparations for war in this province only, amount to an amazing sum. We have plenty of stores of every kind, and double the number of men (that have been in actual war) ready to fight on our side against our insulters. Trade is in a truly deplorable situation; we have nothing to do; people have got much alarmed; many of them are moving off their effects into the country; 50 and some days 100 load of house furniture, is carried off in a day; and as the alarm spreads, I dare say more will go; and if the Whigs should generally remove, which I somewhat fear, those that tarry behind will suffer from want of provisions; and if they should come to a battle, and the country be successful, they will rush into the

town at all events, and probably destroy it. The affair is become serious, the country look on themselves, in this case, as by themselves; and however we in this garrison may conduct, they will be free; they will stand by us as we stand by ourselves; but if we fail, they will not.

It is a little curious that those gentry, *conservators of the peace*, sent here to prevent a mob from tarring and feathering in the night, should themselves, in the face of day, do the dirty work, but such is the fact; and Colonel —, of the — regiment, to his eternal scandal, headed an armed band, and accompanied with his officers, attended this raree-shew through the town;<sup>1</sup> and now the pretty boys are playing Congress, and the feathering Colonel is Chairman of the farce; and have with modesty peculiar to themselves, taken the title of the Grand Congress of Controul; and from this nest of filth and Billingsgate, the town is filled with mock orations and songs, which for composition and sentiment would disgrace the most stupid and abandoned; yet these mandamus gentry, and the wretched tribe of fugitives, from the just resentment of the country, “grin horribly a ghastly smile,” and like their father of old, delighting in the destruction of every thing dear and valuable to the good man.

We are hourly expecting the arrival of the Falkland with dispatches; we then expect the new act with respect to the four New-England provinces. Alas! poor North, thou art a very fool, if you can think by

<sup>1</sup> On March 9, Thomas Ditson, Jr., of Billerica, was tarred and feathered and carried through the streets of Boston by a party of soldiers and officers of the 47th Regiment under Colonel Nesbit. The tune of “Yankee Doodle” was played during the proceeding.

thus making a difference, you can divide. Such is the temper of these Colonies, that every attempt of this kind will but cement the union. Depend upon it, that will be the effect this curious act will have with respect to us; but the merchants in London will not come off so well, many of their debtors here will be ruined; and when no remittances, the stroke will be severely felt; and indeed such is already the situation of things, that were we disposed ever so heartily to pay, 'tis beyond our power, for we have no pay from the country. All trade is at a stand, and the whole attention is to oppose these invaders of our rights, and insulters of our wives and daughters, who have been sent amongst us. May the true British spirit awake before 'tis too late, and pull from his high station that wretch, who wantonly sports with the confidence of his Sovereign, and the lives of millions of the Americans.

I am, dear Sir, your most humble servant.

*Letter II*

BOSTON, *April 22, 1775.*

*Dear Sir,*

When I last wrote to you, I had no conception that the dreadful day of Civil War was so near at hand; but I find I was right in my conjectures (on such an event taking place) that the people would face the regular oppressors, and my hopes have been fully answered by their defeat. There are various accounts of the first beginning of this engagement; the best accounts are thus: For some few days prior to the enterprise, the light infantry and grenadiers of the whole army were excused from all duty, in order that they

might be recruited for some extraordinary service. This detachment amounted to 800 men, which was allowed by the army, and those wretches we call *Tories*, to be the flower of the troops, and were to drive this whole continent; for, say they, "the Yankees will not fight." On Tuesday, the 18th instant, these troops were collected with the utmost secrecy and quietness, about twelve or twenty together, and met at the water side, where about eleven o'clock at night they were ferried over, and marched for Lexington, where Messrs. Hancock and Adams were lodged, and it was supposed they were to take these two gentlemen; however notwithstanding their secrecy, our people found means to get a hint of the design, and dispatched two expresses, which arrived in season, for Messrs. Hancock and Adams to depart, which was effected, not without great difficulty, as they were for waiting the consequence; they, however, did remove from that place nearer to Boston. These troops, between day-light and sun-rise, came up with a company of our minute men, who were exercising, as was their custom, thus early, to save the day for purposes of their business. There are different accounts of their numbers, some say 30, and the most I have heard 90; 'tis probable there might be 50. Colonel Smith, of the 10th regiment, who commanded the troops, immediately ordered the minute men to disperse, and lay down their arms; they replied, they were there only with intent to exercise, and would not lay down their arms; upon which Colonel Smith declared them Rebels, and ordered his men to fire, which they did, and killed eight men.

This is one account; another is, that the minute



men, upon being ordered to disperse, were doing it, and jumped over a stone wall, when the regulars ran at them with their bayonets fixed, and made a great noise; on which one of the minute men fired his gun through surprise, and then the regulars fired several times, and killed the eight men as before. But I think you may depend on this, that the regulars fired first, and the minute men not at all. These facts, no doubt, will be supported by oath; be that as it may, they soon paid for their rashness, for the troops proceeded to Concord, a few miles further, and destroyed a few barrels of flour which were left by the Provincials when they removed their stores 100 miles back into the country, upon their determining in Congress, not to raise an army but with the consent of the Grand Continental Congress. Upon their arrival at Concord, they found a party of 450 of our men upon a hill (for the alarm spreads very fast, by reason of cannon fixed at proper distances, which are discharged as signals) the regulars sent 300 of their party to attack this hill, but before they got half up, our troops fired on them, and killed 18 on the spot; the remnant retreated immediately, when the whole 800 ascended the hill, but retired also with precipitation, and were returning home, when *those few irregulars* determined to attack 800 chosen men, and accordingly pursued them, and came up about one mile distant, and attacked and drove them back to Lexington, and plied them pretty warmly; and the troops themselves acknowledge they must have been destroyed to a man, but for the arrival of Earl Percy with a brigade of 1200 men, and two field pieces. They then made a stand of about half an hour, when they also thought



proper to retreat, which they did, and our people, who gathered fast, kept close to them, and pursued them, with the *Yankee* way of bush-fighting, until they came into Charles-Town, and the sun had been set about half an hour; and we have by this action got in reality the term Yankee, which is an Indian word, and was given our forefathers, signifying Conquerers, which these ignoramuses give us by way of derision.

Thus have I given you, I firmly believe, as true an account as is possible at this time. The number of killed is upwards of 100 regulars, as I am, from the best authority, informed, and a great number wounded, some say 150, 40 of whom are mortally, and many of whom are since dead; and I have heard no account given by any person that expected to be believed, of the people on our side being above 40 killed,<sup>1</sup> including the eight at Lexington; and the greater part of these were murdered by the troops going into their houses to steal their effects.

Thus ended this dreadful day, which has fully proved to all who hear of it, that those rascals who deceived General Gage, by declaring we should not fight, are, as they always were, liars. But was the distress to end here, I could rejoice; but, alas! 'tis the beginning of trouble, for our people have assembled about 16,000 men within a few miles of this capital. They have taken possession of an advantageous post that commands the strong works on the Neck, and are determined to force them; and as their numbers are momentarily increasing, I make not the least doubt

<sup>1</sup> Coburn (*The Battle of the 19th of April, 1775*, p. 158) states that the number of Provincials killed was 49, wounded 41, and missing 5.

by this day week they will have 80 or 100,000 men, and, in my opinion, will be in the heart of this town in ten days. We are in the utmost distress, all communication shut up; the Governor wont suffer a single man, woman, or child to depart. The town has been in treaty with him this day; and tomorrow, although the Sabbath, we have a town meeting; a thing never known here before, that I have heard of. Could I have got my wife and children safe, I should certainly have embarked in this vessel. If the matter ends, I think you may depend on seeing me in the next, if my life is spared; and if I must lose it in this cause, I am sure 'tis a good one. I shall forbear any remarks on this account; but I would only ask, if in all your reading of history, you have found an instance of irregular troops, hurried together at a moment's warning, with half the number at first, attacking and driving veterans, pick'd men, 17 miles, and continually firing the whole way, and not losing one third the number they killed? I view the hand of God in it, a remarkable interposition of Providence in our favour, and our history is full of them. Let me add further, if at a moment's warning, within 20 miles of Boston, men are ready to defeat their full number of regulars, for the accounts I have had of the Provincials don't exceed the regulars, and many say were not above 1500. This I don't assert for fact. But if in this little space, and by men we had no dependance on, compared with the troops we have flocking in from Connecticut, &c. we face them on equal terms, how vain are the chimeras of any person's brain, to think 10,000 shall conquer the continent! I confess I am pleased with my countrymen;

but if the sweet hope of liberty will not induce a free-born American to fight, what will?

I cannot omit a small anecdote, which I had from a gentleman of veracity who was present the day of the engagement: Two waggons with provisions and ammunition for the regulars, guarded by an officer and 13 men, were going to the army, when at about four miles from hence, twelve of our men jumped from behind a stone wall, fired upon, and killed two men, and wounded the officer; upon which the guard retreated, and ran into the woods, and our people took the waggon and the stores.

I have in a hurry given this account; I have not time now to copy, therefore it appears with all defects; I know you will excuse them. Make what use of this letter you please. —, the bearer, will confirm the account as far as can be done in this day of distress.

Where this matter will end, I know not; but that the country will not give up, I think I am certain, therefore I expect great effusion of blood, which I hope and trust the God of Heaven will avenge on the tyrants that have been the cause thereof.

I am, dear Sir, your most humble servant.

*In a letter, dated April 23, from an Officer in Lord Percy's regiment at Boston, who served in the late expedition to Concord, though totally silent about scalping the soldiers and cutting off their ears, there is an acknowledgement of two extraordinary facts: <sup>1</sup>*

1. Tuesday evening the 18th inst. the grenadiers and light infantry of the army received private orders to move from Boston at ten o'clock at night. They

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, June 16, 1775.

were passed over part of the harbour in boats, and on their landing proceeded on the road to Concord, a country town at a distance of twenty miles from hence. Our business was to SEIZE a quantity of military stores, and the BODIES OF MESSRS. HANCOCK AND ADAMS, WHO ARE BOTH ATTAINTED, and were at that place enforcing, by all their influence, the rebellious spirit of the Provincial Congress.

2. On the road, in our route home, we found every house full of people, and the fences lined as before. Every house from which they fired was immediately forced, AND EVERY SOUL IN THEM PUT TO DEATH.

Horrible carnage! O Englishmen, to what depth of brutal degeneracy are ye fallen!

I am, Sir, yours,

ONE, *who once thought it an Honor to be a  
Native of Great Britain.*

*Extract of a letter from Boston, April 23.<sup>1</sup>*

I have been silent some time, in hopes I should have had it in my power to write that matters were like to be accommodated, but those hopes are now at an end. On the 19th instant a brigade went to Concord, about twenty miles inland, to destroy a magazine the Provincials had collected at that place, and were, contrary to their expectations, fired upon. Who began the attack first is matter of doubt, but the military say there was a premeditated design of opposition in the Provincials, and that it matters not who began the attack. To go on, they landed across Charles river at Cambridge about eleven o'clock in the evening preceding, and marched till day-break, when

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, June 16, 1775.

they were diverted from their march by a company of seventy of what they call minute men (who are what have been chosen out of each town, and have been exercising themselves these four months past); these men refused to ground their arms and disperse, and after repeated warnings that they would be fired upon, the King's troops fired and killed a number of them; after that, they proceeded to Concord, and destroyed the magazine and cannon, after staying in town about two hours; in that time a great number of the Provincials to the amount of some thousands, presented themselves, to oppose the retreat of the troops, who were under great disadvantage, being obliged to keep the road, and were annoyed from behind stone walls, of which our fencing is chiefly composed, and from every height, of which the provincials took the advantage, and made great havock; they likewise fired upon the troops out of the houses, of which there are a great many on the road; the dismal consequence of which was, that the troops broke into every house, and put all the males to the sword, and plundered the houses. The troops were so enraged with the fire from the hills, the walls, and the houses, and the prospect of plunder, that it was difficult to keep them in order. This march lasted twelve miles, when a second brigade arrived to reinforce them, or they would have been cut to pieces. They came to the water's edge under the cannon of a man of war, about nine in the evening, under the fire of a prodigious number of the country people, who followed them within a mile of the water's edge. Not expecting such an universal opposition, the second brigade were not furnished with sufficient am-



munition; an armed waggon, loaded with stores, was taken, and the men some killed and the others made prisoners, to the number of twelve. Immediately after the transaction of the 19th, the provincials have been increasing in numbers, and at this time all communication is stopped between town and country; the centinels are within gun-shot of each other. The military think the town, with the present entrenchments, is so well fortified by art and nature, that it is not possible to force them, let the number of provincials be ever so many.

*Extract of a letter from Salem, April 24.*<sup>1</sup>

By the same conveyance that this comes to you, you will have an account of a skirmish between a part of General Gage's army and the Provincials, on the 19th instant. An exact account of the killed and wounded I am not at present able to send you; but it is calculated the King's army lost four times our number, and the Lieutenant Colonel Smith,<sup>2</sup> who began hostilities, is killed. Be assured that the ill behaviour of the regulars have determined many people to declare for the cause of liberty, that were before lukewarm. General Gage by this time, I believe, is made sensible of our fixed resolution to defend our liberties. And, let me tell you, the sense of the people here is, that we are supporting the liberties of England in contending for the rights of America.

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, May 30-June 1, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel Smith was wounded.

*Extract of a letter from a Gentleman of Rank in  
New England, dated April 25, 1775.<sup>1</sup>*

All eyes are turned upon the tragical event of the 19th. On that day a party of Gen. Gage's Army, consisting of about 900 men, and led by Colonel Smith, marched secretly to Lexington. It is supposed their object there was to seize on Messrs. Hancock and Adams, two of our deputies to the General Congress. They were alarmed just in time to escape.

When the Troops reached Lexington, they found a small party of Militia assembled on the Green, whom they attacked with great shouts, and menaces. At their approach the Militia dispersed, yet the Troops fired upon them and killed several.

After some outrages at Lexington they marched on to Concord, where they untrunion'd some old iron guns. By this time a body of the Militia was assembled, and marched up to the Bridge, where the Regulars had taken post. The Militia obeyed their Officers orders, received the fire of the Regulars, and drove them from their post. This was the only regular action, for the Troops retreated with all possible expedition to Lexington, where they were received by Lord Percy with 1200 men and some cannon.

The Militia pursued and harrassed them in their retreat; but upon the junction they were so greatly outnumbered, and without cannon, that they could not venture a regular engagement. The reason why the Militia were never in a large body equal to that of the Regulars was, that the alarm being sudden, they ran in small parties with such weapons as they could first pick up, in their hurry, to different parts of the road.

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, June 17-21, 1775.

From Lexington the Army returned to Boston with such precipitation as to expose themselves to a continual fire from their Pursuers, and to leave many of their wounded to fall into the hands of the Militia.

Thus ended this affair, much more to their loss than ours; a circumstance that highly enspirits us, when we consider that with all their vaunts of infinite superiority, our Militia, suddenly assembled, without a plan or leader, and at no time equal to them in numbers, could force them to retreat with confusion and loss.

The truth is, Sir, that we fight in a very different cause. We consider every thing that is dear and valuable as depending upon our arms; and we are unanimous in the resolution, *to die, or be free*. We pray God that the same confidence may inspire our fellow Subjects in England, should they be put by the same Ministry to fight for their Liberties.

Thus, Sir, a civil war is commenced; but how or where it will end, he only knows on whose hands are all the corners of the earth. What policy could prevail on General Gage thus to commence hostilities, and throw every thing into confusion, at a time when we understood conciliatory propositions were preparing on both sides, we are at a loss to conceive. But the blow is now struck; and however we may deplore, we can not prevent the consequences. War, and War only, is the word. Boston is besieged by 22,000 men, forming a good Army, with able Generals. Should the General be reinforced, and march out, the conflict will be dreadful.

I have gone over the whole of the ground of the late engagement. The road is wide, and the country ex-

tremely open. No place could have been more favourable to the Regulars. Such scenes of carnage and of blood are new and horrible here. I saw some houses that had been set on fire, and some old men, women and children that had been killed. For the honour of the Soldiery, tho' our enemies, I hope they will be able to acquit themselves of the cowardly and inhuman temper which this transaction upon the face of it implies.

We understood that it was reported in Boston, that some of the wounded prisoners had been scalped, maimed, and treated with great barbarity. Upon this Gen. Ward sent a flag of truce to Gen. Gage, to assure him that all possible care was, and should be taken of the wounded; but if he confided more in his own Surgeons, they should have liberty to attend them. After this we suppose no credit will be given to such calumnies. We are fighting from a desire of maintaining our liberties, and not from motives of enmity against Englishmen, whom we have been taught to love and revere. Indeed we do not impute our persecutions to the people of England; but to the Tory Administration, equally hostile to them and to us. At any event, our cause is of too much dignity to be stained with unnecessary cruelties.

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, April 28.*<sup>1</sup>

The confusions we have had in this country for the last twelve months, are mere trifles to what actually exist at this present moment, occasioned by an express which arrived here last Monday from Boston, which brought intelligence, that the Regulars and

<sup>1</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, June 24, 1775.



Provincials had certainly commenced hostilities, and an engagement ensued, wherein many were slain on both sides. As soon as the news arrived here, the whole city was in the greatest ferment. The accounts the express brought, were publicly read at the coffee-house to multitudes of people, who were animated almost to madness, at what they called joyful news; such news, as I am sure must make every humane hearer shudder with horror. An association was entered into at once, and signed by great numbers, who are forming in companies, and are exercising every day. Most of the counties in this province are in the same state; in short, from Nova Scotia to Georgia are in arms, and all animated with a zeal really surprising. The association is become so general here, that I am afraid both Mr. — and myself will be under the necessity of signing it, or be marked as Tories here. Notwithstanding I like this country so well, and have formed many valuable connections in it, yet I cannot forget that England was the country of my birth; though we have hitherto been neuter, and could wish to remain so, yet of that we are doubtful, unless we sacrifice more interest than prudence dictates; I have had a greater opportunity of knowing this country than many more, especially the provinces of Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, York, &c. as I have traversed through the most of them, and as such can form some judgment of the strength of those parts of the continent. As hostilities are commenced, and the parliament seem determined to force us into an acknowledgement of their supremacy, I dread the worst, for I am sure they never can do it, from the number of the inhabitants, and the very situation of



this country; besides our Rifle men, who are used to shooting in the woods, will never come to an open engagement; they are very expert at the Indian manner of fighting; you see by the papers how they cut off the regulars. — Great Britain may block up all our ports, and stop our trade, but by doing that, must greatly hurt herself, as it will deprive us entirely of remitting, and then her own merchants will be the sufferers.

*The following letters which came from two Merchants in New York to their Friends in London, may be depended upon as genuine:*<sup>1</sup>

*Letter I*

NEW YORK, May 1, 1775.

This Country is now the Seat of War, and, you may depend that if the Parliament dont soon repeal all the Acts complained of by the Continental Congress, you will lose America, its Trade, and all the Debts due from it; all business has ceased.

*Letter II*

NEW YORK, May 11, 1775.

By the last accounts from England we hear, that the Americans are to expect no favours from the Ministry; that there were four thousand troops, and some men of war, coming out for this place; the people seem determined to oppose their landing; it is expected this place will soon be reinforced with five or six hundred troops from Connecticut to assist the opposition. I dread the consequences. Many of the Store-keepers

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, June 23-26, 1775.

are removing their goods into Connecticut for safety. The Courts of Justice, it is said, are shut in Connecticut, and a general Gaol Delivery throughout the Province. It is thought our Port will be shut up in a few days. Messrs. Hancock and Adams passed through this city a few days ago, on their way to Philadelphia; about a thousand of our inhabitants went out to meet them, under arms, and ushered them into town; and a troop of about five or six hundred horse escorted them through the Jerseys. All our Delegates are gone to Philadelphia, and it is thought very spirited measures will be adopted soon after their meeting.

We are informed, by the last accounts from Boston, that there were before the town fifteen or twenty thousand brave fellows, to defend their country, in high spirits, and very anxious to make their way into the town. Should the King's troops attack, the inhabitants will be joined with seventy or eighty thousand men, at a very short notice.

*Extract of a letter from a Gentleman at New-York, to his friend in England, dated May 1, 1775.*<sup>1</sup>

The unnatural and destructive war so long dreaded is at length commenced: The joint Address of your two Houses of Parliament; the augmentation of your force in this country; the Fishery Bill; and Gen. Gage's late attack, are all so very repugnant to the Overture of Accommodation, grounded on Lord North's Motion of the 20th of February,<sup>2</sup> that I fear

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, June 14-16, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> Lord North's so-called "olive branch," in which he proposed dealing with each colony as a separate community.

all hope of a speedy reconciliation is at an end. Great Britain (except at Boston) has not now the least shadow of Government on this Continent from Halifax to Georgia.

Before the irritating blow of the 19th of April, there were many who, though they were shocked at the open avowal of the House of Commons respecting the taxation of America, still flattered themselves that some sort of compromise would take place in a course of negotiation. But from a persuasion, that the General has orders to make the Appeal to the Sword, they consider the proposal of peace as a deception, and fly to their arms. The news of the attack at Boston reached New York on Sunday the 23d, and that very day the populace seized the city arms, and unloaded two provision vessels bound for the Troops at Boston. In the course of the week they formed themselves into companies under Officers of their own chusing, distributed the arms, called a Provincial Congress, demanded the keys of the Custom-house, and shut up the Port, trained their men publicly, convened the Citizens by beat of drum, drew the cannon into the interior country, and formed an association of defence in perfect league with the rest of the Continent, which is signing by all ranks, professions and orders.

A man must be an utter stranger to this country, who imagines Mr. Gage can move an inch toward awing this Continent into submission. And who, in the name of common sense, could have projected the restraint upon the Fishery as friendly to your designs? They did not consider, that it calls home as many men from the Banks, as your little Army, when

reinforced at Boston, will consist of; and that it drives these Seamen to the sword for revenge, while the Landsmen may keep at the plough.

The Congress sits in ten days: If General Gage does not irritate us again, perhaps they may propose terms for a re-union; but I almost despair of it. The late Address of your two Houses of Parliament has given a deep wound to the affection of your Colonies, and the subsequent violence has raised such suspicions of perfidy, that I rather dread the Congress will be for conducting the war.

For Heaven's sake have mercy upon that remnant of loyalty and filial affection you have left us, and throw it not away to your natural enemies.

*Extract of a letter from New York, dated May 2.<sup>1</sup>*

*Dear Friend,*

I am just returned home from exercising, which was this day in a particular manner recommended to the inhabitants. The inhabitants are forming themselves into companies under men of known spirit and experience. This day a sub-committee is arrived from Philadelphia on a brotherly visit. The Jerseys have sent us word, that they are at our service, should we be attacked; and from a report that an attack was expected to be made upon us, several companies of New England men are actually arrived in this town. I conversed with one of them, who told me he had left his farm to come to our assistance; and one of their Captains assured our people, that if they wanted men, they could furnish us with ten thousand in three days time. They exercise to admiration: it is true

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, July 5, 1775.

they have not that sprightly and foppish appearance of regular forces when nicely powdered; however, they are hardy, can endure fatigue, and have made themselves masters of the essential parts of military skill. Four New England governments have two hundred thousand of these soldiers in arms; they are a sober, good kind of people, strong pedestrians, and think it a part of their religious duty to defend their charters, but I am persuaded they do not wish to oppose Great Britain; and if their King was disposed to favour their opinion, would gladly return to their old allegiance. Mr. Pitt's motion<sup>1</sup> would yet prove effectually remediable; let government remove the forces, and hold out the olive branch, an emblem of peace: all will then subside. As the case now stands, it is in vain to expect to drive the Americans from that rough and hilly country which they possess. 'Tis true, you can destroy their trade, of which they are very fond; yet you may rest assured, that notwithstanding the high estimation they hold it in, they consider its preservation in no degree adequate to the loss of their invaluable liberties.

*Extract of a letter from New-York to a gentleman in this city, dated May 4.*<sup>2</sup>

My last to you was of the 25th ult. when I gave you the particulars of what was done till that day in this city, since which the populace have broke loose from

<sup>1</sup> On January 20, 1775, William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, moved an address to the King praying that he send orders for the removal of the troops from Boston as soon as possible in order to open the way to peace, and that the "fatal acts of the last session be repealed." On February 1 he presented to the House of Lords a provisional act for settling the troubles in America. This bill was rejected.

<sup>2</sup> *Bristol Gazette*, June 15, 1775.



all restraint, popular meetings were called by beat of drum, armed men demanded the keys of the custom-house officers, and the port remained shut for four or five days; all the small cannon in the town were dragged out some miles in the country, and the magazines were secured.

The committee has been augmented to 100 men, and invested with new and ample powers to act in all cases whatever. Twenty-one deputies have been chosen, to meet others from the counties in provincial congress, on the 22d inst. and to complete the whole we have entered into an association, which has already been signed by above 1,500 inhabitants in this city, and is daily signing by vast numbers, and you may depend upon it will be universally signed throughout the province. I have inclosed you a printed copy of it, by which you will see that we bind ourselves by all the ties of religion, honour, and love of our country, to carry into execution whatever the continental and provincial congress shall resolve to do; the result of which will be to raise men and money. I expect they will resolve upon a total non-exportation agreement in less than a month. This of course will cut off all the resources of our remittances, and be the ruin of thousands both here and in England; this, however, is but a secondary consideration, when put in competition with our liberties and lives. Before this bloody affair happened, we flattered ourselves that the army was only sent over *in terrarum*, but we are now convinced they are sent to butcher us: But, since that is the case, we are determined not to survive the liberties of America; thinking it better to be buried freemen, than live to be slaves. The minions of power

have made us desperate by their oppressive acts, and their declaration that our opposition is rebellion; we deny it, and insist, that upon the principles of self-preservation, resistance to tyranny is justifiable by the laws of God and man.

*A letter from New-York, May 4,<sup>1</sup> says,*

The late unhappy affair at Boston has had most amazing effects through every part of America; in this city it is astonishing to find the most violent proposals meeting with universal approbation! — The whole city is arming and removing the cannon to a strong pass about 18 miles off, where a camp will be formed; in all probability the cities on the sea-coast are devoted to destruction, but we have long since reconciled ourselves to the idea of giving them up. Many families are retiring into the country, all business declining fast, and in a few weeks we expect will totally cease. The port here was stopped in a tumultuous manner a few days ago, and is not yet opened; but that will be done this day, except to Newfoundland, and those colonies which have not acceded to the measures of the Congress.

*Extract of a letter from a private Gentleman in Philadelphia to a Merchant in London, dated May 6, 1775.<sup>2</sup>*

The Rage Militaire, as the French call a passion for arms, has taken possession of the whole Continent. The City of Philadelphia has turned out 4000 men, 300 of whom are Quakers. Every County in our Province is awakened, and several thousand Rifle-

<sup>1</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, June 17, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, June 28-30, 1775.

men on our Frontiers are in readiness to march down to our assistance at a moment's warning, if necessary. The Congress will sit in Philadelphia, notwithstanding the threats of the Ministry. The place of their Meeting will be guarded by Companies of Militia, and each Delegate will have centinel at his door every night.

*Extract of a Letter from a gentleman in Philadelphia, dated May 7, to his friend in London.*<sup>1</sup>

Our assembly is now sitting; and in answer to the Governor's speech, wherein he proposes a kind of plan (but one that is in the general opinion very inadequate to the end proposed) for the settlement of the dispute,<sup>2</sup> have let him know, they are determined to support the people in the measures that have been already adopted for the preservation of their liberties, and salvation of North America. It is generally thought they will grant the necessary supplies for carrying on the war, without the consent of the Governor; and such is the spirit of the people, I am confident no taxes will be esteemed burdensome which may be laid for the purpose; nay, so heartily are the Philadelphians in the cause, that divers of our most wealthy men have publicly declared they will cheerfully sacrifice their lives and fortunes in the defence of it. England must submit; she never can withstand the torrent; was she to drain her country to a man, I firmly believe she would lose the day.

To give you some idea how prevalent the spirit of resistance is here, I need only observe, that a number

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, June 24-27, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> Governor John Penn urged the Assembly to weigh the terms offered in Lord North's plan of conciliation.

of boys, from the age of thirteen to sixteen went out this morning to the place where the inhabitants muster to learn the discipline, and most earnestly requested they might be admitted into the body; however, as it was concluded not to take any under eighteen years of age, (after being commended for their spirit) they were refused, to their no small mortification.

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, May 8.<sup>1</sup>*

Lord Dunmore, Governor of Virginia, after having fortified himself in his Palace, was obliged by the inhabitants to go on board the men of war in the River.

It is also strongly affirmed, that the Provincials have taken the Forts of Crown Point and Ticonderago into their hands, together with all the ammunition and stores.<sup>2</sup>

Almost every man that can produce a firelock is with the utmost assiduity learning the military discipline, and I verily believe that at this moment there are 5000 men under arms in this city; even the *Friends* have laid aside all scruples, and joined in the ranks, except the old men and the heads of the Meeting, of whom such service is not expected.

A Petition has been presented to the House of Assembly, praying them to grant 50,000l. or 60,000l. for public uses; it has already had two readings, and we hope will be granted; for when trade is stopped, there must be some means found to employ the poor, as they must be supported.

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, June 23-26, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> Ticonderoga was not taken until May 10 and Crown Point two days later.



*Extract of a letter from a gentleman at Charles-Town, South-Carolina, to his friend in London, dated May 10.<sup>1</sup>*

Our late brethren of Danvers, who fell fighting for their country, were interred, with great solemnity and respect, on Friday last.

The public most sincerely sympathizes with the friends and relations of our deceased brethren, who gloriously sacrificed their lives in fighting for the liberties of their country. By their noble intrepid conduct, in helping to defeat the forces of — — —, they have endeared their memories to the present generation, who will transmit their names to posterity with the highest honour.

In consequence of the action of the 19th ult. (so disgraceful to the King's troops) the Provincial Congress immediately voted a standing army of 30,000 men, of which 12,800 are to be of the province of Massachusetts, the rest from Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island; and have appointed General Ward Commander in Chief; Major General Putnam, of Connecticut, was ready with 6,000 troops, and it was supposed would be the second in command.

Sixty thousand men were in arms at Cambridge, and the Congress sent word to all the inhabitants of the sea ports to remove immediately, or expect no protection.

The town of Boston capitulated to lay down their arms, and march out on the 25th. They have accordingly laid down 2,500 stand, and no injury had been done to the inhabitants. The resolution was, to attack the town and castle on the 29th, in confidence that they should carry it.

The General was removing his best effects out of the

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, July 5, 1775.



town; and when the Tories resorted to him, to know where they were to be protected, if he surrendered the town, he only d—— them a parcel of v——ns, who had abused him in the representations of those people.

The mode proposed to advance to the fortifications, by Gen. Putnam, was by fascines made of hay, pressed into bundles, and pushed forward upon jacks. Three days after the engagement two of General Gage's most able engineers deserted and came over to the Congress.

Lord Percy said at table, he never saw anything equal to the intrepidity of the New-England minute men.

Marblehead was blocked up by a man of war, and Capt. Allen (who brought us the above intelligence in 13 days) was chased out to sea when he left Salem. In short (he says) nothing could equal the spirit and firmness of the province.

I am afraid before this day thousands may be slain on both sides. We do not fear all the force that can be sent against us, for we have a just cause in hand, and no doubt but we shall meet protection in a merciful God.

The Delegates from this province (who are the same that went last year) sailed on the 3rd inst. for Philadelphia.

Our companies of artillery, grenadiers, light infantry, light horse, militia, and watch are daily improving themselves in the military art. We were pretty expert before, but are now almost equal to any soldiers the King has. It is talked of raising a company of *Split Shirts*<sup>1</sup> immediately.

<sup>1</sup> A name, like "shirtmen," for the southern riflemen. For description of uniform see letter dated July 19, 1775, Norfolk, p. 171.

You judge very right when you imagine that the troublesome and critical situation of the times may be the means of deferring my intended voyage to another season; for every American should quit England immediately, and never desire to see it more, unless we can enjoy our former liberties and properties.

*Extract of a private letter from New York, brought by a vessel now in the River.*<sup>1</sup>

A report prevails here, that Gen. Gage is no favorite at St. James's, owing to his inactivity. If the facts be really so, I am now fully convinced of the propriety of an opinion I always entertained, that the theorems of a statesman, far removed from the scene of action, can seldom be carried into execution with safety. Were the King's troops to hazard an engagement on the event of which any point of material consequence depended, without a moral certainty of success, the Commander would merit the severest censure, as a failure must increase the spirit of opposition, and infuse fresh vigour into the councils of the Provincials, a circumstance that should be avoided with all possible caution. The opinion entertained here is, that the General only waits the arrival of the troops to proceed to immediate action, there being no time to lose, as the men of war in the harbour of Boston must quit their station before the frosts commence; otherwise the inhabitants will either by force or stratagem set them on fire. Believe me when I assure you that an enthusiastic love of liberty has pervaded the whole continent of America, which, if properly directed, would lay the foundation of a great empire. Be that

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, July 18, 1775.

as it may, the fatal effects of opposing superior authority, no matter on what principle, is felt in some of our colonies already; the planters are obliged to relax the necessary severities exercised toward their slaves, who are become restive to those they formerly implicitly obeyed: but what is still more melancholy, the once limpid fountain of civil justice is become corrupted, and political opinions influence judicial determinations. For my part, I am only a spectator of what passes, and have no wish but that the spirit of liberty may be moderated with such distinction, and supported with such firmness, that we may never find it necessary to seek a remedy against anarchy in an extension of prerogative.

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, May 12.*<sup>1</sup>

People here, finding their dependence for powder from abroad precarious, are forming nitre pits, and determine to drive on that important manufacture with great vigour. An hundred weight of gun-powder is said to have been made at Germantown every day for some time.

I conceive Lord N—— [North] will find himself as much disappointed in his expectations from my native colony as any where: indeed, he cannot think of any thing else, when he is informed of their late behavior. They still proceed, with caution, wishing rather to settle matters by negotiation rather than run the risque of having their capital destroyed; but on no account will they be flattered or frightened into a desertion of the common cause.

Guns, bayonets, and carriages for cannon, seem the

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, July 8–11, 1775.

general manufacture of this city. The scheme to prevent the American army to receive provisions by sea is futile, as the country overflows with them in convenient nearness to be brought by land.

*Extract of a letter from F—— M——b, midshipman on board the Lively Frigate, now stationed off the neck of land near Boston, and dated May 14.*<sup>1</sup>

About five o'clock in the morning of the 20 ult. the day after the skirmish at Lexington, Capt. Lindsay, of the Falcon sloop of war, came on board of us and ordered us to slip our cable, and come along side of him, to take on board two six-pounders, with powder and shot, &c. which he had no sooner done, than we sailed up a small river,<sup>2</sup> about a league distant from Boston. It then being dark, we struck several times; but at last, about two in the morning, we came to anchor, within a mile of Cambridge; and at four, being then on watch with two men, I heard some noise in the woods, and at dawning of the day I observed 200 men coming down to us, who hailing, informed us that they were "true sons of liberty, and that if we did not send a boat ashore they would fire on us." I immediately acquainted the Captain with this, who ordered all hands to turn out of their quarters. We loaded the four swivels which belonged to the tender, as also the two guns we had taken on board, with a double charge. When we had got every thing ready for an engagement, the Americans fired upon us, but (thank God) killed none of us; we then fired a swivel loaded with round and grape shot,

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, July 13, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> Charles River.

which killed two men and wounded many more. The fire on both sides continued half an hour, when we, by our cannon, swivels, and muskets, got a compleat victory, having only two men wounded. The Americans had 25 killed, and 30 wounded, whom they left on the shore. When the affair was over, we sailed for Boston with flying colours.

Captain Lindsay told the Admiral of our good behavior, who said he would take notice of us when we came to Boston.

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, May 15.<sup>1</sup>*

We have heard from the Provincial camp near Boston. Gen. Gage is still closely invested, and receives no supplies from the country; so that his army and the poor inhabitants yet remaining must be great sufferers if it continues long. I am assured they will attack the General in the town as soon as the people have generally retired, which they are doing as fast as possible. All kinds of provisions and milk extremely dear and scarce, but the provincials are well supplied; and it is difficult to make the country people accept pay for what they bring. They have tents for 30,000 men; provisions and ammunition for 20,000 for twelve months, and have been since April ready to take the field. Whatever the Congress resolve will be faithfully executed; but I believe it will be little more than a council of war. Every man here without distinction is learning the use of arms, and even the Quakers have their companies. It is a strange sight to see the young ones exercising, and to hear the words, 'Shoulder thy fire-lock,' &c. What division

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, June 29-July 1, 1775.



remained, the measures of Parliament, and the affair at Lexington, have wholly done away. It is to be hoped the nation will open its eyes to these measures before it is too late.

*Extract of a letter from Charles Town, New England,  
May 19, 1775.<sup>1</sup>*

After the engagement between the Regulars and Provincials at Concord, the Town of Boston entered into a capitulation with General Gage. He agreed, on delivering up their arms, they should come out with their effects. It is complied with on their part; on his there is a shocking failure. Those that come out are not allowed to bring provisions for their support. His conduct has so irritated the Country, that great numbers from thence are now under arms. He and his Troops are now shut up in Boston, and suffering with the Inhabitants for want of fresh provisions.

*Extract of a letter from Boston.<sup>2</sup>*

I propose to give you a circumstantial account of the fire, previous to which please observe, that for ten days past a report has been propogated that the liberty party intended to set fire to the town in several places, as soon as the greater part of them had got out. The General took the alarm, and took the engines under guard, and appointed new Captains; the late engine man took umbrage at it. But to the point — I being informed the barrack was on fire, ran through the street, crying fire! (as no bell rang) but

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, June 28-30, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> *London Evening Post*, June 26-27, 1775.

was stopped by a man who told me it was the officers order not to call fire, one having threatened to beat out the man's brains that did, the drums all this time beating to arms. When I came to the fire, I found no engine there. Applying to one of the late engine men to know the reason, was informed that he had applied for the engine, but the bayonet was presented at him, and he was told he must apply to some officer before he could have it. After this fatal delay, the engines appeared, with the new appointed Captains and military firewards, and a miserable figure they cut, the former not knowing how to obey, if the latter had known how to command. Upon the whole it appears to me as plain as the meridian sun, had the engines been on the old footing, the fire would have been put out, and twenty thousand pounds sterling loss prevented. Let that be as it may, I will venture to say, had the fire broke out in the center of the town, it would have laid it in ashes, in the direction it took to the water.<sup>1</sup>

*Extract of a letter from Worcester (Massachusetts's Bay),  
May 20.*<sup>2</sup>

It is confidently asserted, that several houses in Boston, belonging to persons who had moved out of that distressed town, have been plundered of effects left therein, by the soldiery. The Hon. John Hancock's, Esq., house, we hear, was entered by a number of soldiers, who began to pillage and break down the fences; but upon complaint being made by the select men to General Gage, he ordered the fences to be

<sup>1</sup> The fire occurred on May 17.

<sup>2</sup> *London Chronicle*, July 8-11, 1775.

repaired and Lord Percy to take possession of the house.

All accounts agree that five or six hundred marines, to reinforce the King's troops, arrived at Boston on Saturday last from Halifax.

Our army has begun an entrenchment at Cambridge.

General Gage is making Boston as secure from an attack as he possibly can. However it is thought by some that the bulwarks are not so strong as to be impregnable.

When the second brigade marched out of Boston to reinforce the first, nothing was played by the fifes and drums but *Yankee Doodle* (which has become their favorite tune ever since the *notable exploit*, which did such *honour* to the troops of *Britain's King*, of tarring and feathering a poor countryman in Boston, and parading with him through the principal streets, under arms with their bayonets fixed:) Upon their return to Boston, one asked his brother officer how he liked the tune now, — "*D——n them*, returned he, they made us dance it till we were tired" — Since then *Yankee Doodle* sounds less sweet in their ears.

*A Part of a Letter from Salem, dated May 21, 1775.*<sup>1</sup>

As the channel of conveying intelligence from hence is become very precarious, I am happy in the opportunity of sending to you at any rate, even at the risque of my letter being either lost or detained, as may perhaps be the case in a foreign vessel.

The day before yesterday arrived here two vessels

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, July 13, 1775.

consigned to the Messrs. F——, with whom you have heretofore had very capital dealings, laden with biscuits, butter, cheese, and salt pork, as per inventory from Ireland; on board which four Custom-house officers, and a guard of six soldiers, were put in each, and the hatches locked down till a proper search could be made for contraband goods. In the evening, however, of the same day, the people on board one of them having been pretty well plied with liquor, and a seeming friendship subsisting which laid all suspicion, a boat full of people came on board among whom were the Captains of both ships, who, without making the least disturbance, confined the guard and slipping their cable, fell down the harbour, in order to go round to Newbury, just on the other side of Cape Anne, as they found they could not safely land their cargoes here; but unfortunately they were met by an armed schooner coming in who hailed them, to which they made no answer. On this the schooner fired at them; but it being dark they still had hopes of getting off. The King's officer then manned two boats, in one of which he went himself and boarded her; in doing which several shots were exchanged on both sides, and one of the ship's men was unfortunately knocked overboard. The schooner brought her in the next morning at day-break, when the crews of both vessels were set on shore; and though it is reported no stores or ammunition of any kind were on board them, their cargoes were condemned.

A few days since near two hundred women and children were suffered to leave Boston, by order of the Governor, who are gone to Cambridge, Worcester, King's-Acre, and Providence.

We have just an account that the New-Yorkers have fitted four large vessels, with twenty carriage guns each, and small arms on board, for the protection of that harbour and the trade.

The King's troops at Boston are far from being in that despicable plight which the London papers assert them to be; they live as well as any troops in his Majesty's garrisons abroad; they have fresh meat once every week, and, what is particularly conducive to their health, plenty of garden stuff, particularly potatoes. Supplies are brought weekly from Quebec and the Westindia Islands, as well as from Ireland and Great Britain. The expence, however, to the government is amazing; and if it should last long, which God forbid, cannot fail of being felt very severely in England.

The Americans very politically export nothing but what they are paid in ready money in cash; nor do they import at all, except where they can barter their own commodities for necessities which they actually want, such as sugar, molasses, rum, linen, and woollen cloths, &c.

We have just heard from Fort Edward, that the Provincials have encamped 8000 men in the very way through which any land supplies or intelligence from Quebec must post. The season however is now far advanced, and it is to be hoped that the return of winter, which will put a stop to all military field preparations, will open a channel for an accommodation, which is sincerely wished here by every moderate man who is a friend to either party.



*Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman in New York to his Friend in London, dated May 22.<sup>1</sup>*

According to my promise, I am now to inform you, that an express arrived here this day from Ticonderago, which brings an account, that Major Skene's Snow on Lake Champlain was taken last Tuesday by forces from Virginia, who have joined our militia and that of Connecticut. She is an armed vessel, and of some consequence on the lake. The New-England people have timber ready, and are building 14 sail on the lakes, all to be armed vessels. The fort at Ticonderago is defended by about 2,800 men from different colonies: this is to secure us from incursions of the Roman Catholics.

We last Friday received 28 tons of gunpowder, which by this time is at Bedford, on the borders of this Province, in the heart of the country. Our magazine is intended to be kept at that place; 321 pieces of cannon, of private property, are lodged in the hands of the Committee, who have sent upwards of 150 pieces out of town yesterday, although it was Sunday; the carts were all employed as usual, and about 1000 barrels of pork sent to Bedford in part of the magazine. Upon a calculation made here, we have upwards of 600 tons of lead in and about this town, which will be all removed as soon as possible. The women and children are quitting the town fast. I expect to see it in ashes before long; which, I hope, may be the case of every one in the continent, rather than our liberty should be wrenched from us. We are in expectation of receiving another supply of powder

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, June 27-29, 1775.

very soon; that which arrived last Friday, came from a neighbouring state gratis.

*Extract of a letter from Marblehead, May 25.<sup>1</sup>*

Since the cowardly attack of the provincials of the 19th past, on his Majesty's troops, this country is in a great ferment, the provincials having propogated a report, that the people of Great Britain are in a civil war on our account, and with the most matchless effrontery, asserting, his Majesty's troops wantonly fired first on the innocent Americans: the contrary, be assured, is the fact. Mr. L——,<sup>2</sup> of Marblehead, who furnished the rebels with rum, in order to spirit them up to fire, is since dead of the fright.

General Gage has taken every prudent precaution to preserve his troops, and the people under his protection.

He will not suffer any of the select men, or persons who have abetted the measures of the provincials to leave the town, keeping them as hostages to save the lives of the loyal subjects without the town at Marblehead; the rebels threatened to murder every one who would not take up arms against the King's troops; but the commander of a ship of war sent word to the select men, that if they took up arms against the King's troops, he would lay the town in ashes, but would protect them from violence, if they behaved peaceably and quiet. — General Gage has stopped one of the Parsons from going out of Boston

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, June 27–29, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> This probably refers to Jeremiah Lee, of Marblehead, who died on May 10 as the result of a fever brought on by exposure. He with a number of others hid in a cornfield while the British soldiers searched the Black Horse Tavern on their way to Lexington the night of April 18.

who, in one of their discourses, have inflamed the deluded multitude to acts of rebellion. We have not now the least ground of dispute longer, as the General has assured us his Majesty and Ministers, together with the parliament of England, have left the tax to pay for our protection, together with the mode for the Americans to do it amongst ourselves.

*Extract of a genuine Letter, dated 26th of May last, from an Officer on board one of the King's Ships at Boston to his Friend in London.*<sup>1</sup>

A few nights ago we received an alarm, that a body of 300 of the Provincials were assembled on the banks of the river, with the intention of sending down fire boats to some of our boats stationed near this place. We were ordered to take three boats, having 24 men in each, and endeavoured by firing upon them, to disperse them; we were well armed and had two swivels in each boat. Upon our attempting to land, they maintained their ground, and gave us a general discharge of their small arms, which killed five of our men, and wounded two others. We immediately returned their fire, both with our small arms and the three swivels, which we could easily perceive disconcerted them greatly, for they drew back upon our landing; and upon observing another boat coming up to our assistance, they seemed in great confusion. We repeated our fire on both sides, and they retreated with precepitation; we followed, and took 15 of them prisoners, and could have taken three times that number, but were afraid of following them further. No person of any note on the side of the Provincials was

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, July 13-15, 1775.

in this engagement; and it is plain, that they must be raw, undisciplined men to suffer such a small number as we consisted of to make them retreat with precipitation. The number of their killed is 32, besides several who were wounded, and whom, in their confusion, they left behind. The number of our killed, by the second fire, were only three.

*A Letter by a Ship from South Carolina; which place she left the 27th of May.*<sup>1</sup>

Captain Crawley is the last vessel which will sail from thence, which makes me desirous to write to you again, though you will receive this so soon after my last.

Our port from henceforth is shut up, by order of the Congress; and to shew you that we are in earnest, a large platform of twenty-four guns, all twelve pounders, is placed on the greatest wharf. From New-York vessels mounting eighteen guns each, besides swivels, are moored at the entrance of the harbour.

Our militia has been mustered, and consists of 17,000 men, besides officers. I was present at the reviewing them a few days since, and was much pleased to find them so regular and exact; though I hope we shall have no occasion for them in the present dispute.

The utmost order and regularity is observed in the town; morning and evening guns are fired by the ships, and answered by the town garrison: every opportunity is taken to get supplies of ammunition, which, on account of our proximity to Pensacola, is not a very difficult matter.

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, July 18, 1775.



A regular post, which is attended by a guard of twelve men, is now settled between every principal town in this continent from New-England to Georgia, and the letters delivered with the strictest exactness. This regulation has taken place for more than six months, as we now no longer depend on any other conveyance.<sup>1</sup>

You will see what pains I have taken to make you remittances: but impossible, as no money is now sent out of any of the provinces. The carrying away any of the specie, if discovered, would be punished with the strictest severity.

We have received an account, though a very irregular one, of a frigate having been run ashore on Boston Neck by the carelessness of the pilot, and having been set on fire and burnt, for fear of her falling into the hands of our brethren. The provincials daily grow stronger in New-England; their whole force is now computed at 11,000 men.

*Extract of a letter from a Surgeon of one of his Majesty's ships at Boston, May 26, 1775.*<sup>2</sup>

My curiosity led me to make use of the privilege of my profession to visit the New-England camp, and some as acquaintances in it, who had formerly been my fellow-students at Edinburgh. Among others I saw — who attends a number of those that were

<sup>1</sup> As early as in July, 1775, Mr. Goddard, printer of the *Maryland Journal*, published his plan for establishing a post-office to take the place of the British colonial establishment. In May, 1775, Mr. Goddard's plan was working. Two posts a week were being sent between New York and Philadelphia, as well as between many other places. On July 26, 1775, the Continental Congress definitely took control of the post-office and appointed Benjamin Franklin Postmaster-General.

<sup>2</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, July 8, 1775.



wounded on the 19th of April, I did not think it fair to ask him the particulars of that day, as we are on different sides; but he assured their loss greatly exceeds that of the regulars. There is a large body of them in arms near the town of Boston. Their camp and quarters are plentifully supplied with all sorts of provisions, and the roads are crouded with carts and carriages, bringing them rum, cyder, &c. from the neighbouring towns, for without New-England rum, a New-England army could not be kept together; they could neither fight nor say their prayers, one with another; they drink at least a bottle of it a man a day. I had the honour to see several of their great Generals, and among the rest, General Judariah Pribble: He is a stout looking old fellow, seems to be turned of 70. This army, which you will hear so much said, and see so much wrote about, is truly nothing but a drunken, canting, lying, praying, hypocritical rabble, without order, subjection, discipline, or cleanliness; and must fall to pieces of itself in the course of three months, notwithstanding every endeavour of their leaders, teachers, and preachers, though the last are the most canting, hypocritical, lying scoundrels that this, or any other country ever afforded. You are mistaken, if you think they are Presbyterian, they are Congregationists, divided and subdivided into a variety of distinctions, the descendants of Oliver Cromwell's army, who truly inherit the spirit which was the occasion of so much bloodshed in your country from the year 1642, till the restoration, but these people are happily placed at a distance from you, and though they may occasion a little expence of men and money before they are re-

duced to order, yet they cannot extend the calamities of war to your island. They have not been hitherto the least molested since the affair at Lexington. Time has been given for their passions to subside, but I do not suppose that the General's patience will continue much longer, he is at present confined to the town of Boston, and all supplies from the country stopped, and both the navy and army live upon salt provisions of that sort; I am well informed, there are nine months provisions in the town.

We have great plenty of drink of all kinds, particularly rum: It has not risen above fifteen pence a gallon by the single gallon. We have a most excellent fish-market, and as much pork, cod, haddocks, hollibut, flounders, and a variety of small fish, as we can possibly consume, at a very low price, and the gardens upon the islands and within the town are large enough for raising sufficient sallad, pease, beans and greens for the summer's use. We could easily have fresh meat for taking it from islands and promontories, which it may come to at last. In the mean time transports are gone down to Nova-Scotia for live stock for the use of the army and navy, and to Canada for a very large quantity of wheat and pease for the same purpose. There are a number of excellent mills in town. As a specimen of the news in their camp, it is given out by their teachers, and firmly believed by the rabble that follow them, that John Wilkes, Esq., the Lord-Mayor of London has taken up arms against the King, and is encamped with 80,000 of their friends on Blackheath: That there have been risings in their favour in all the great manufacturing towns over England: That the King had

been deserted by the greatest part of his army, and was fortifying himself in Windsor Castle, attended only by the third battalion of his guards.

*A letter from an officer, to his friend at Edinburgh, dated camp at Boston, May 31,<sup>1</sup> says,*

The discovery of a diabolical plot to murder almost every officer in the garrison, has occasioned part of us to encamp immediately, the officers of the remainder are obliged to lie in the same barracks with their men. The rascals were to have made a sham attack at night upon the lines, and the inhabitants in town were to have posted parties at the lodgings of all the officers, and murdered them as they ran out on the alarm; after which they laid their account with the private soldiers joining them.<sup>2</sup>

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, June 3.<sup>3</sup>*

The Debates of the Continental Congress, and their resolves, are not yet known. They have ordered the Committee of Inspection to prevent supplies being sent to any of the dissenting Colonies, and to the army at Boston, upon which several Newfoundland vessels, laden at this place, and cleared out, have been stopped. There is no communication at all with the Province of Canada now, not even by post for the mail being constantly stopped and examined by the Massachusetts people, the post master will not per-

<sup>1</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, July 22, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> There was an ever-present fear in the minds of the British authorities that, in the event of an attack on the city from without, the loyal inhabitants within would rise and join in the attempt to destroy the British troops.

<sup>3</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, July 15, 1775.

mit it to go through; this town has just instituted a post, but it has not yet much business. Everything here is in great confusion; all the people able to bear arms, are training and preparing for defence, in case the ministry persist in enforcing the laws.

The colonists have actually possessed themselves of Fort Ticonderoga with all its ordnance and ammunition therein, and in every skirmish seem to have the better of the regulars, which is no wonder, as they have ten times as many men, all accustomed to arms from their infancy and not engaging regularly, but taking all advantages. If the Congress were to hold up independence, the King might have by far the most friends here; he might carry the point without sending forces of any kind, for all the best people are attached to him and the constitution, but are wonderfully jealous of the ministry. Everyone here interests himself deeply in this cause, but I am not able to judge how the matter will terminate; it may possibly depend much upon the Congress, for I am confident the whole body of the people will be governed by them.

*The following is part of a letter received from a Member of the House of Assembly of Virginia, dated June 4.<sup>1</sup>*

I am now confined to the Assembly, which met on Thursday last. Inclosed you have the Governor's Speech, Lord N.'s Olive Branch, as it is called, viz. the Resolve of the House of Commons, is looked on throughout every Colony whose Assembly has met, as an insult to the injuries offered, and will not be accepted. We have been here in a state of confusion

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, July 19-21, 1775.



for some time, owing to the Governor's removing the powder out of the magazine in the night, on board of a sloop of war, and the flame of the people again kindled by his Lordship fixing guns in the windows and doors of the magazine, loaded, with spring locks, to fire on the hoisting of a window, or opening of a door; which, on an attempt of some of the Citizens to get some of the arms for the Volunteers of Williamsburgh, fired and wounded several young Gentlemen, though fortunately not mortally. I fear this snare of the Governor on the lives of the Sons of Liberty, will raise fresh commotions in the country, and I much dread its consequences.

*Extract of a letter from a Gentleman in Charles-Town, South Carolina, to his Correspondent in this city, dated June 10.<sup>1</sup>*

I mentioned to you in my last the effects the engagement that happened in New-England had upon the people in New-York. Every arrival from thence confirms the concurrence of this province with the rest of the continent; nay, they seem to act like real converts, and endeavour to out-do the rest of the provinces; they have drove almost all the Tory party out of the town, or made them fall into the same measures with themselves.—The inhabitants of Georgia are about to do the same, a letter from thence yesterday mentions their having had another meeting, when the Whig party went armed with a full determination to drive the Tories who would not join the rest of the continent out of the province. The Governor was so much alarmed, that he actually sent to the grenadier company for protection, who nobly

<sup>1</sup> *Bristol Gazette*, Aug. 3, 1775.



threw up their commissions, and to a man refused him any. We expect every day to hear that Georgia is one with us.

We all most earnestly wish for peace and reconciliation between Great Britain and America, upon just, honourable, and constitutional principles; but are determined to have it upon no other. If any on your side of the water imagine America will grow tired and give up the matter, they are greatly mistaken, as the New England restraining Fishery Bill, the Bill respecting the Southern Colonies,<sup>1</sup> and indeed every act of government respecting America does but exasperate them the more, and still raise and strengthen that spirit of Liberty and just Opposition.

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, June 10.<sup>2</sup>*

On board Captain McCulloch, from London, came passenger Major Skeene,<sup>3</sup> Governor of Crown Point, with four other officers belonging to the regiments at Boston; they are now under a strong guard of our militia; which was occasioned by their own conduct; for a few days before the Captain made the land, he spoke with a vessel, who informed them of the late battle of Boston; upon which Major Skeene and the other officers endeavoured to take the command of the vessel, in order to proceed immediately to Boston, but were overpowered by the Captain and crew. The Captain put them into confinement; and having represented them to the Committee as mutineers, they will be tried for it shortly.

<sup>1</sup> The bill restraining the trade of the southern colonies.

<sup>2</sup> *Morning Chronicle and Daily Advertiser*, July 22, 1775.

<sup>3</sup> Major Philip Skene, royal governor of Crown Point and Ticonderoga.

*Extract of a letter from New Jersey, June 11.*<sup>1</sup>

A ship bearing strange colours, in which was a black eagle, stood into this harbour; she said she came from a place we never heard mentioned before, I think it was Ebden in Friesland. The Committee immediately sent some of their number on board to examine her: they found she was loaded with arms, brass cannon, ammunition, linen, coarse woollen goods, and other merchandize. She landed about twenty gentlemen and officers, most English, some Danes, and a few Germans. They said, they came to seek shelter from tyranny, to support liberty in America, and to acquire settlements which they would defend with the peril of their lives, and spend their best blood in the cause of America. The committee gave them leave to have a free market; their goods sold in a hurry, and the ship is gone to sea again. The people landed brought horses, formed troops, and are gone to join the army besieging General Gage. They expected seven more ships from two towns, one called Koningsberg, and the other Lubeck, full of soldiers and adventurers, many of them Polish Dissenters, and further said, all the Protestants in Germany prayed for America, and wished they could get there to help the Americans.

*The following is part of an authentic letter from Boston, transmitted from thence to one of the first houses in this city, dated June 11, 1775:*<sup>2</sup>

I sit down in the midst of confusion to give you as an exact account of the late engagement between Gen-

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, Aug. 4, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, July 21, 1775.

eral Gage's army and that of General Putnam, as can be possibly collected at present from the various accounts of it, and time will not admit of any delay, as I know your expectations, and a vessel is to sail as soon as the Governor's packet of dispatches is compleated. I must premise to you that in order to avoid making any kind of noise, when the transports arrived two sloops were stationed at the mouth of this harbour, as also that of Salem, to direct an equal number of transports into each place, as well that the alarm might be less, as to deceive the country people in the number of the troops. Parties were also stationed at Salem, Boston, and on the neck and high ground to prevent any communication with the *Rebels*, (which was the word mentioned in the general order).

The transports arrived in the afternoon of the 9th instant, those in which the three generals were anchored before Boston town,<sup>1</sup> and almost at the same time disembarked, and began to march to form a conjunction. General Gage went to meet the general officers with whom he had a long conference on the platform, surrounded by subalterns and officers of lower rank.

By what means is not known, but before night the news of the arrival of the fresh supplies was communicated all over the country, and accounts were brought into the town that troops of the rebel army were collecting in great bodies at Lexington, Marblehead, and other places. As soon as these advices arrived, a general muster of the town's people was ordered, on which it appeared sixty families had ab-

<sup>1</sup> The three Major-Generals, Sir William Howe, Sir John Burgoyne, and Sir Henry Clinton, arrived on the *Cerberus*, May 25.

sconded. Every guard was examined to know who had favoured their escape but without success.

A council was immediately called, at which all who could be conveniently assembled made their appearance, and assisted during the night. Different accounts were brought in of alarm guns being fired at several distinct distances, which continued till daylight, some of them were distinctly heard in the town. I heard several. Our whole town was in arms and at alarm.

The surprising spectacle which presented itself in the morning was a large body of troops on Lovely D—— which<sup>1</sup> lies rather above, and in consequence thereof overlooks the town, and is about seven miles in circumference; and some people were so exact in their description, as to assert they saw several pieces of cannon. In this however they were mistaken, as it appeared afterwards.

At eight o'clock every soldier having been refreshed after disembarkation with fresh provisions, and having been well supplied with grogg, were drawn up and passed before the governor and their officers. — Dispatches were sent and a regular communication with Salem fixed. In short, every preparation was made as if we were going to sustain a siege. The men of war were anchored as close to the neck as they could to float at low water. In this disposition we waited impatiently several hours, expecting a visit. The alarm guns from the country the outposts could hear very distinctly at intervals. At noon something like a proclamation was sent out; <sup>2</sup> it is said read, though

<sup>1</sup> Probably Dorchester.

<sup>2</sup> On June 12 General Gage issued his arrogant proclamation, declaring



received with great disdain; the messengers were suffered to return. Some assert it was never even opened but that is of little consequence and my time is short, I shall pass over such pucilios.

I was at dinner at four o'clock, when we were suddenly alarmed with the firing of platoons, on which we all rose, in order to enquire the reason, when we saw a general hurry among the officers and soldiers striving all to get soonest to the place of action. A party of the provincials, it seems, were endeavouring to intercept a party of soldiers from Portsmouth, which first began the dispute; this town was soon deserted, except the guard of the avenues, and the armies both appeared on the same ground.

The provincials who had planted an ambuscade, a party of them feigned to retire, and were followed by a detachment of the regulars, whom another party closed in upon and began a terrible slaughter. The engagement was now almost general, and continued about five hours, when, I am told, from want of ammunition and proper supplies, it was concluded. The general and the troops returned to the town seemingly in disorder. The provincials had retired about three miles but still kept the field. At eight at night one of the advanced guard brought in a letter from the Americans, desiring that the soldiers, who lay wounded, might be taken up, which I believe was granted. According to accounts the provincials acknowledge to have lost 1700 men; the loss of the government's forces is kept as secret as possible. The

martial law, pronouncing those in arms to be rebels and traitors, but offering pardon to all who lay down their arms, "excepting only from the benefit of such pardon Samuel Adams and John Hancock."



soldiers being forbid to talk to the town's people on the subject, so that their loss cannot be determined, but it is said, killed and wounded amount to about 1000 men. People were employed two days in burying. The barracks and hospitals are full of maimed.<sup>1</sup>

The next morning we received a very authentic account that the provincials had been joined since the engagement with 10,000 men from different quarters, so that another rencounter is expected. I shall leave the town as soon as I can, but at present no person is permitted to be shipped any where from hence.

We have just received in four vessels from Jamaica and the Spanish Main, supplies of sheep, hogs, rum, wine, biscuit and flour, and more are expected daily. I must conclude now as I have not five minutes more to spare. I hope to bring the next account myself; and assure yourself shall fall down on my knees and thank God, when I have the first opportunity of doing it in Old England.

P.S. I had almost forgot to tell you that the Governor has given orders for the town's people to be supplied with whatever they may want from the King's stores at prime cost: this has gained him many friends; it seems to be the general wish, that the Government may relax in some of their severities, without which it will be impossible ever to put an end to the present dispute. We expect four more men of war from England daily, two of those here being ordered home: they will sail as soon as ever the others arrive.

<sup>1</sup> This may be a garbled and exaggerated account of the skirmish on Noddle Island which occurred on May 27th. See letter of June 18, pp. 133-135.

*Extract from a private letter brought by the vessel lately arrived from Rhode Island.*<sup>1</sup>

Every hopes of reconciliation between the mother country and the colonies is now vanished, the proclamation has been issued, the people are worked up to a pitch of frenzy that is truly alarming; the names of Adams and Hancock are immortalized by the exception made against them; Adams is a man properly calculated to become a consequential leader in times of anarchy: he was bred to the law, has strong natural parts, with coolness to place it in the most favourable point of view, and having nothing to lose, has every thing to expect; Hancock has nothing beyond the common level of mankind to recommend him but an affluent fortune, and great perseverance in what he undertakes. They are adored by the people, and I verily believe they would not accept of their own terms unless attended with impunity to these their leaders; the more sensible part of the people are astonished at the directions sent by the ministry to several governors on the West India islands to draft the regiments and send them to the continent; surely this cannot be true, the ministry however abandoned, cannot wish to expose our most valuable settlements to our known enemy; a Mr. Dashwood has been sent here to direct our Post-Office, and prevent communication between the colonies; he landed 'tis true, viewed the country, shaved, dined, and is returned I believe on the same bottom which conveys this: our situation precludes conjecture on the event of this unfortunate disunion, which certainly originated in the parish of St. James.

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, July 21, 1775.

*Extract of a Letter from an Officer of Rank, dated Boston,  
June 18.<sup>1</sup>*

We left Cork early in April, and after a very tedious and disagreeable passage of seven weeks, arrived here on the 26th of last month. On our landing, we found every thing in the utmost confusion, partly rising from the murmurs of the soldiery, the difference of opinion among superior officers, the want of fresh provisions, the general unhealthiness of the troops, and above all, the misery of the wretched inhabitants, destitute of food, raiment, and property. Whether it was an aggregate of all these, or a weakness arising from a sea sickness, which commenced at the Cove of Cork, and only left me on my landing, I will not pretend to say; but I have been totally confined to my room since last Sunday. Yesterday morning the troops were ordered under arms at three o'clock, on a boat being sent from one of the ships of war to acquaint us, that the Rebels were raising works, in order to besiege us, and put us between cross fires. Feeble as I was I arose and dressed myself, and went down to the head quarters, to offer my services. There were two reasons, however, which prevented their acceptance; one was my state of health; the other, that the regiment I belonged to was not ordered out. The troops destined for that service were landed on the Charles Town side, between eight and nine o'clock; <sup>2</sup> but on account of the number of the Rebels, the troops did not begin the attack for a

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, July 28, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> According to Frothingham, the troops marched through the streets of Boston at about twelve o'clock and landed on the Charlestown side at about one o'clock. For a full discussion of the events of the battle see Frothingham, *Siege of Boston*, pp. 121-53.

considerable time. In the prodigious confusion this place is in now, all I can tell you is, that the troops behaved with the most unexampled bravery, and that, after an engagement of nearly five hours, we forced the Rebels from their posts, redoubts, and entrenchments, one by one. This victory has cost us very dear indeed, as we have lost some of the best officers in the service, and a great number of private men. Nor do I see that we enjoy one solid benefit in return, or likely to reap from it any one advantage whatever. We have, indeed, learned one melancholy truth, which is, that the Americans, if they were equally well commanded, are full as good soldiers as ours; and as it is, are very little inferior to us even in discipline and steadiness of countenance. This sudden, unexpected affair has had however one good effect upon me, for I find myself much better.

Yours, &c.

P. S. Since I wrote the above I fell into conversation with a gentleman who was present at both actions, and who tells me that the King's troops must have been destroyed in each, had the rebels known their own strength, particularly on the former's return from Lexington to Boston on the 19th of April.

*The report circulated of an action at Boston, so early as the 10th of June, in a letter said to be received at a house in the City cannot be true, many of a later date being received, which make no mention of such an event; on the contrary, one, asserted to be genuine, and dated June 18, from on board the Nautilus<sup>1</sup> says,*

We are just now convoying a ship with the General's

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, July 19-21, 1775.



dispatches clear off this Coast. Nothing of consequence has happened at Boston since the 19th of April, except a skirmish or two between the Enemy and some parties of Troops who went a foraging for hay on certain Islands in the Harbour. The Rebels still continue the blockade. Their out-centinels, the other day, called to our's, to send out the Light Horse, that they might beat them, as they had beaten the Grenadiers and Light Infantry. They have taken Ticonderago, in which place were eighty pieces of cannon and a large quantity of stores. It is reported they have now some of these guns before Boston. Before our lines, in Camp and Roxborough, the rebels amount to three or four thousand men; at other Towns in the neighbourhood it is said there are 22,000. — All the troops from Ireland are arrived in good health, and the horses in excellent condition. Only sixteen horses died in the passage, and they brought forty spare ones. Sixteen of the Transports which were ordered from England to New York, are by the General ordered to Boston: With this addition our Army will then amount to about ten thousand men, all in high spirits, and terribly exasperated against the Provincials. — On the 13th inst. General Gage published a Proclamation, offering a pardon, in the King's name, to all Rebels who shall forthwith come in, and lay down their arms, excepting only Hancock and Adams. No regard is paid to Lord North's terms of accommodation. The word with the Sons of Liberty, as the Rebels stile themselves, is Join or Die. I expect to hear of bloody work very soon, as our Troops are determined to lay all the country waste as they go, with fire and sword. The prisoners



have been all exchanged. The Merlin is at Marblehead. As soon as we part from our Convoy we are to proceed to New York; and from thence to Philadelphia, to put the restraining Act in execution.

*Extract of a letter from an officer of the army in Boston, and dated June 19, 1775.*<sup>1</sup>

When I left England, the service on which I am now come, was even at that time irksome and disagreeable, but now it is doubly so. The cause in which we are concerned is entirely obliterated; our disputes as from man to man are of a private nature; the people of the country have by various methods exasperated and enraged us, and to free ourselves from a situation so disagreeable and confined, there is not any thing we would not attempt. I confess, upon the grand basis of this business, we all unanimously acquit the Colonists, and every hour of the day pray for Lord N—— [North] to head us. After the skirmish of the 17th, we even commended the troops of Putnam, who fought so gallantly, *pro aris & focis*. When we marched to the attack of their redoubt they called out, "Colonel Abercrombie, are the Yankees cowards?" Nor did they discharge a gun until we were within fifteen yards. The fire on our left wing was so hot, that our troops broke; but the grenadiers, with an uncommon fury, attacked the trenches and forced them, when our soldiers rallied again. We kept possession of the intrenchments 'till the next morning, when we marched into Boston; a sad remains of those glorious fellows we led into the field! General Howe was three times in the action left by himself, so nu-

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Aug. 5, 1775.

merous were the killed and wounded about him; and, alas! I grieve to tell you, that I fear nine out of ten of those gallant fellows will die of their wounds. The loss of the Provincial troops is trifling in comparison of ours; and indeed another such onset will be our ruin. A universal murmur now runs through the army, which ever most disagreeably invades the General's ears. An Irish officer humourously said on the occasion, that indeed we had gained by the loss. In short, all you have yet sent by way of troops to this continent are but a mouthful. If you send more to add to us, we may make them a dinner; and you may continue to supply them with supper, and then it will be good night! Indeed we may say with Falstaff with good propriety, that "they make us here but food for gunpowder." I wish all these domestick animosities were settled, and also our private ones; but even in our promotions, glaring and unjust partialities prevail. So very secret was the late action conducted, that the Generals Clinton and Burgoyne, knew not of it 'till the morning, though the town did in general, and Putnam in particular.<sup>1</sup> This man served under Prussia, and does honour to his master; he is 63, and brave to the back bone. I hope better times, but these are really sad ones. — Adieu.

*An extract of a letter sent to a Gentleman in Reading, by an Officer on board one of his Majesty's ships at Boston, dated June 19, 1775.*<sup>2</sup>

Our Troops last Saturday landed at Charles-town, under the command of Gen. Howe, but met with no

<sup>1</sup> See General Burgoyne's letter, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, July 28-31, 1775.

opposition till they advanced within two hundred yards of the rebels entrenchment, situated above Charles-town, on a hill. The light infantry and grenadiers received the first fire, just as I was landing Major Pitcairne and the marines, about two hundred yards off the spot where the engagement began, so that I could see all that passed till the storming of their battery. The rebels opposed our troops with firmness, and in less than fifteen minutes there was the hottest fire that any of our Soldiers ever saw, kept up by five thousand Rebels and two thousand of our troops; they fell very fast on both sides. This happened about three o'clock in the afternoon; all the Grenadiers, except five, were cut off in storming the battery, which was in our possession by four, at which time Charles-Town was in flames, being played upon by our carcasses from Boston-hill. In the intrenchment lay fifty-two dead Rebels, and fifty-seven dead Soldiers. Accounts of the killed on both sides differ.<sup>1</sup> An Officer of the 52d, mentions that he counted two hundred of ours, and two hundred and fifty of the Rebels; the wounded are more numerous. During the greatest part of the night I was employed in carrying the wounded and dead Officers to Boston. The 52d regiment lost eight Officers. Major Pitcairne was killed. All the Soldiers are charmed with General Howe's gallant behavior. — The Rebels retreated to the woods, and hills; our army is encamped about two miles from Charles-Town. It is expected they will

<sup>1</sup> The estimates of the number of troops that took part in the battle vary widely, as well as the accounts of the killed. Fisher (*Struggle for American Independence*, 1, 342) estimates the number of Americans in the battle as 1500 or 1700, the killed and wounded as 449; the number of British as 2500 or 3000, the killed and wounded as 1054.

march on to Cambridge. — Dr. Warren, the Orator, was found among the dead.

*Extract of a letter from a gentleman at New York, to his friend at Edinburgh, June 21.*<sup>1</sup>

A worthy young man, an Indian preacher, with three of his tribe, just arrived from the six Nations, were with me this morning. They are come to wait upon our Provincial Congress, now sitting in this city, with the news that the Indian nations are determined not to act against the Colonies. They also inform me that even the Canadian Indians are our friends. The Continental Congress have recommended it in the warmest manner to all the colonies to observe the 20th of next month as a continental fast. A regular army of 70,000 men is to be immediately raised; all ranks of people are in arms. Seventeen regular companies are already formed in this city who have no pay and provide themselves with uniforms, arms, and ammunition. Should the unhappy contest continue six months longer, it is very probable that we will have near 200,000 bold resolute men disciplined to as great perfection as any of his Majesty's troops. The Provincial army at present at Boston consists of 20,000 men, and increases daily. General Worcester, the chief commander of the Connecticut troops, is soon to encamp near this city with 2000 men. It is a gross calumny to say, that we are aiming at independency, for our political principles are the same that raised the house of Hanover to the throne; and were your ministers to adopt these principles, we would immediately lay down our arms.

<sup>1</sup> *London Evening Post*, Aug. 17-19, 1775.



*Extract of a Letter from Boston.*<sup>1</sup>

What account you will have from authority, of the late action, I cannot guess, but if the ministers print General Gage's dispatches, *as he sends them*, I am clear it will appear one of the most unhappy affairs that could have happened. To explain it as well as I can, I shall inform you, that the Provincials occupy three principal posts, which they connect by troops and thereby hold Boston besieged; these are Roxbury, Cambridge, and Charles-town; the chief and strongest is Roxbury, the next is Cambridge, and the last is Charles-town. Putnam got some information that the young Generals (who every body said were sent to spur General Gage) had proposed dislodging him from Roxbury, upon which they added many works to the natural strength of those heights. He received another advice on the 16th, that the attack was certainly against Charles-town, upon which he marched 5000 men, and in the night threw up a breast work, and lined it with cannon, giving orders for reinforcements being at hand. General Gage was certainly unacquainted with this circumstance, for he detached not more than 2700 men, at a time when he might have spared 7000 quite as easily. General Howe on the march to attack the breast-work, found, which he did not know before, that the strength was such that the troops could do nothing against it without cannon, which quite deranged his design to make the attack by a bold and sudden effort without a halt. The lines had to halt several times, exposed all the time to a dreadful though irregular fire from all parts of the entrenchment of cannon, and their infernal

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, Aug. 3, 1775.



rifles, which cut down our officers at a distance, never fired by regular troops. This was the bloody part of the action, and a most cruesome it was, for our men dropped incessantly, while at such a distance that their fire arms against men behind a breast-work had no effect; and had the cannon been properly provided, they might have moved with sufficient expedition. It was this horrid fire that threw the troops into such confusion; by the time they were rallied and led on again, they gained so near the enemy, that the latter were broken and retreated, not from loss, but a regular line advancing within sight of the bayonet, is what they will not stand. They retired to Cambridge in tolerable order, leaving six pieces of cannon behind them. Charles-town is burnt, and the General, it is said, will keep and fortify the post. Our loss in killed and wounded is not far short of 1800 men. Our officers, who served all King Ferdinand's campaigns, assert, that so large a proportion of a detachment was never killed and wounded in Germany; upon the whole we have the day most clearly, but have suffered ten times more than it is worth; and if Putnam has half the spirit I hear he has, I am confident we shall soon be driven from the ruins of our victory. As to the Provincials, they will, I am clear, never stand against us in a fair line, but behind hedges, walls, or breast-works, their fire is truly formidable, and their rifles peculiarly adapted to take off the officers of a whole line as it marches to the attack. Our three Generals came over in high spirits, and expected rather to punish a mob than fight with troops that would look them in the face; but there is an air of dejection through all our superiors which forebodes

no good, and does not look as things ought to do after a victory. If we have not 10,000 reinforcements soon, I hope ——— will be hanged.

*A letter received by a gentleman in Westminster, from Mr. Grant, one of the surgeons attending the Military Infirmary at Boston, dated June 23,<sup>1</sup> says,*

I have scarce time sufficient to eat my meals, therefore you must expect but a few lines. I have been up two nights, assisted with four mates, dressing our men of the wounds received the last engagement; many of the wounded are daily dying, and many must have both legs amputated. The provincials had either exhausted their ball, or they were determined that every wound should prove mortal; their musquets were charged with old nails and angular pieces of iron, and from most of our men being wounded in the legs, we are inclined to believe it was their design, not wishing to kill the men, but leave them as burdens on us, to exhaust our provisions, and engage our attention, as well as to intimidate the rest of the soldiery.

*An Extract of a private letter brought by the Cerberus to a Gentleman in Lombard-Street, dated June 23, 1775.<sup>2</sup>*

Charles-Town from whence the Provincials were driven is a small village about the distance of half an English mile from Boston, separated by a narrow river, this situation was the most favourable that could be had for the purpose of annoying the regulars, but unfortunately for the Provincials, lay ex-

<sup>1</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, Aug. 5, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, July 28, 1775.

posed to the fire of the cannon from the harbour; in one night they raised a battery and sunk entrenchments, from which they have been drove, both parties receiving considerable damage; however the Provincials retreated in such good order that out of 27 pieces of cannon they left but five or six behind.<sup>1</sup> They marched to Cambridge a small town about four miles distant from Charles-Town, which they entered more like troops elated with conquest than depressed with defeat; the country people flocked from all parts, with provisions to their assistance, nor does it seem they are in the least affected by the event of the attack, saying that a few such victories would restore America to her liberty. Indeed the loss of two such officers as Pitcairne and Abercrombie cannot be readily repaired. The Regulars set fire to Charles Town, which consisted of about 900 wooden houses, and entirely consumed it. Were the Provincial's discipline equal to the Regulars, not all the levied forces of England could subdue them, but as each individual acts from principle it is difficult, nay even impossible to keep them within the bounds of discretion upon an attack. A very short space of time must determine this unhappy difference either by superior force or famine; our fields lay uncultivated, our labourers being all under arms, from which 'tis easy to conjecture the gloomy prospect that opens to the view by looking a little forward. In every engagement that happens, you must expect to hear an account of the loss of a great number of officers, as the provincials make their destruction a principal object in the attack.

<sup>1</sup> According to Frothingham (*Siege of Boston*, p. 152), only six pieces of cannon were in the action, five of which were left behind.

*Part of a genuine letter from Boston, dated June 23, 1775,  
brought by the Cerberus.<sup>1</sup>*

There is no instance in history of the Mother Country knowing so little of her Colonies, as Great Britain does of America. Your Ministers never had any true information of the state, temper, and strength of this country. Your king seems to be infatuated, with a parcel of Scotchmen and Jacobites. At least this is the best excuse that can be made for his conduct, and keeping them about him. If this was not the case, he would have removed his evil councillors long since, and thereby healed this unhappy quarrel. But if I am mistaken I can only say, hypocrisy cannot conceal his character much longer. We are here, and must shift for ourselves. We have arms in our hands, and will use them in defence of our liberties. You may court slavery, and be fond of it. We will not. Do not hand this letter to the press, lest your Scotch Judge should call it libel, and some poor printer be exposed to his malice, for he hates the press, and your juries have not spirit enough to oppose him. I wish you could send Lord Mansfield<sup>2</sup> hither, and with him Lord Sandwich.<sup>3</sup> They should be made acquainted with our law and our courage. Our troops are as well disciplined as your's, and they are better marksmen, as your officers know very well. An account of the late action on Bunker's-Hill, at the back of Charlestown, you will have, in General Gage's and General Howe's letters. I will only tell you, that General Howe was sent out with two thousand five hundred

<sup>1</sup> *London Evening Post*, July 25-27, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> William Murray, Earl of Mansfield, who expressed his belief in the absolute dominion of England over the colonies.

<sup>3</sup> John Montagu, Earl of Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty.



men, or better, to dislodge a body of our troops on Buncker's-hill. When the troops had begun their march, the ships threw carcasses into Charlestown, and have burned it entirely. It was a pretty town! but now there is not one house standing! It is nothing but a heap of ruins. Let this dispute end which way it will, though you never can conquer us, this once fair and opulent province is ruined!—All America will revenge our cause! On the first attack your troops gave way; they did not expect so heavy a fire, General Howe rallied them; for near a minute he was quite alone; his Aid de Camp was killed at his side. The officers brought up the men, and suffered for their temerity. General Clinton, with another corps, presently followed. General Putnam, who had not quite 4000 Connecticut men, thought the whole army was coming, and without the least disorder, or even pursued a single step, left Buncker's Hill, and went to another hill, about half a mile further, where he has remained ever since, without the least disturbance. If the mercenaries had offered to march a yard after him, General Ward, with his New-England men, was ready to give a good account of them. General Howe is to come back to Boston, having had better than two thirds of his men killed and wounded. Believe me you cannot succeed in this mad and wicked attempt to conquer. Every hill will be disputed with you, and every inch of ground. Two more such actions will destroy your army. We can afford to lose ten men to your one, and have three times your number, at last. We are informed you intend to bombard and destroy our seaports. You may. But we will destroy the light-houses and beacons; and in



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the first high wind all your ships of war will be wrecked on our coast. We shall get plunder in return for our towns being destroyed, and you will lose your navy. I wish your King may see his error before it is too late. We love and honour the English nation. But the ministry and parliament do not do justice to the people; who we know do not approve of this American massacre.

P.S. General Howe will do justice to the bravery of our troops. He makes no secret of saying, he never saw troops behave better during the whole war. It has been proposed to attack Roxbury-Hill, but the design is laid aside; the officers all declare, it will cost more men than the post is worth, so the army must remain cooped up in Boston, or go on board the ships.

*Extract of a letter from General Burgoyne to a Noble Lord,<sup>1</sup>  
dated Boston, June 25.<sup>2</sup>*

Boston is a peninsula, joined to the main land only by a narrow Neck, which on the first troubles Gen. Gage fortified; arms of the sea, and the Harbour surround the rest on the other side, one of these arms to the north is Charles-Town, or rather was, for it is now rubbish, and over it a large hill, which is also (like Boston) a peninsula; to the south of the town is a still larger scope of ground, containing three hills, joining also to the main by a tongue of land, and

<sup>1</sup> Lord Stanley.

<sup>2</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Sept. 1-4, 1775. The same letter appears in *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, Sept. 2, 1775, headed, "The following is positively asserted to be a genuine extract of a letter from General Burgoyne to his lady, written since the action on Charlestown heights."

called Dorchester Neck; the heights as above described, both north and south, (in the Soldier's Phrase) command the town, that is, give an opportunity of erecting batteries above any that you can make against them, and consequently are much more advantageous: It is absolutely necessary that we should make ourselves masters of these Heights, and we propose to begin with Dorchester, because from particular situation of shipping and batteries (too long to describe and unintelligible to you if I did) it would evidently be effected without any considerable loss; every thing was accordingly disposed, my two Colleagues and myself (who, by the bye, have never differed in one jot of military sentiment) had, in concert with Gen. Gage, formed the plan; Howe was to land the transports on one point, Clinton in the center, and I was to cannonade from the Causeway, or the Neck, each to take advantage of circumstances: The operations must have been very easy; this was to have been executed on the 18th. On the 17th, at dawn of day, we found the enemy had pushed intrenchments with great diligence during the night, on the heights of Charles Town, and we evidently saw that every hour gave them fresh strength; it therefore became necessary to alter our plan, and attack on that side. Howe, as second in command, was detached with about two thousand men, and landed on the outward side of the peninsula, covered with shipping, without opposition; he was to advance from thence up the hill, which was over Charles Town, where the strength of the enemy lay; he had under him Brigadier General Pigot; Clinton and myself took our stand, (for we had not any fixed post) in a





large battery directly opposite to Charles Town, and commanding it, and also reaching to the heights above it, and thereby facilitating Howe's attack. Howe's disposition was exceedingly Soldier-like, in my opinion it was perfect. As his first arm advanced up the hill, they met with a thousand impediments from strong fences, and were much exposed. They were also exceedingly hurt by musquetry from Charles Town, though Clinton and I did not perceive it till Howe sent us word by a boat, and desired us to set fire to the town, which was immediately done; we threw a parcel of shells, and the whole was instantly in flames; our battery afterwards kept an incessant fire on the heights; it was seconded by a number of frigates, floating batteries, and one ship of the line: And now ensued one of the greatest scenes of war that can be conceived; if we look to the height, Howe's corps ascending the hill in the face of entrenchments, and in a very disadvantageous ground, was much engaged; to the left the enemy pouring in fresh troops by thousand, over the land, and in the arm of the sea our ships and floating batteries cannonading them; strait before us a large and noble town in one great blaze; the church steeples being of timber, were great pyramids of fire above the rest; behind us the church steeples and heights of our camp, covered with spectators of the rest of our own army which was engaged; the hills round the country covered with spectators, the enemy all in anxious suspense; the roar of cannon, mortars, and musquetry, the crush of churches, ships upon the stocks, and whole streets falling together in ruin, to fill the ear; the storm of the redoubts, with the objects above de-



scribed to fill the eye, and the reflection that perhaps a defeat was a final loss to the British Empire in America, to fill the mind, made the whole a picture and a complication of horror and importance beyond any thing that ever came to my lot to be witness to. I much lament Tom's<sup>1</sup> absence — it was a fight for a young Soldier that the longest service may not furnish again, and had he been with me he would likewise have been out of danger, for except two cannon balls that went an hundred yards over our heads, we were not in any part of the direction of the Enemy's shot. A moment of the day was critical, Howe's left was staggered, two battalions had been sent to reinforce them, but we perceived them on the beach seeming in embarrassment what way to march; Clinton, then next for business, took the part without waiting for orders, to throw himself into a boat to head them; he arrived in time to be of service, the day ended with glory, and the success was most important considering the ascendancy it gave the regular troops; but the loss was uncommon in Officers for the number engaged.

Howe was untouched, but his Aid-de-Camp Sherwin was killed; Jordan, a friend of Howe's, who came *en gage le de [sic] coeur*, to see the campaign, (a Shipmate of ours on board the Cerberus, and who acted as Aid-de-Camp) is badly wounded. Pigot was unhurt, but he behaved like a Hero. You will see the list of the loss. Poor Col. Abercrombie, who commanded the Grenadiers, died yesterday of his wounds. Capt. Addison, our poor old friend, who arrived but

<sup>1</sup> The Honorable Thomas Stanley, a nephew of General Burgoyne, who had already started for Boston as a volunteer.

the day before, and who was to have dined with us on the day of the action, was also killed; his' son was upon the field at the same time. Major Mitchel was but very slightly hurt; he is out already; young Chetwynd's wound is also slight. Lord Percy's regiment has suffered the most, and behaved the best; his Lordship himself was not in the action: — Lord Roden<sup>1</sup> behaved to a charm; his name is established for life.

*Extract of a letter from one of the principal leaders in the provincial army before Boston, dated June 26th, and may be relied on.*<sup>2</sup>

*My dear Friend,*

Strict orders having been given that no letter shall be received on board the men of war from any of those who have the courage to appear in arms against the unconstitutional and oppressive measures of administration, and the late inflated proclamation having pronounced such severe penalties against those who shall correspond with men thus acting in defence of all those great and essential privileges which our forefathers ever held so dear, it becomes difficult for me to convey, or perhaps for you to receive any information from this side of the water, except from men retained in the pay of administration, who have every inducement which profit and prejudice can inspire to misrepresent the truth. After the windy proclamation of the 12th, our troops became enraged, they were not led on to action. This learned proclamation was burned by the hands of the common hangman at Cambridge, Roxburgh, and Deutester-

<sup>1</sup> Lord Rawdon of the Fifth Fusiliers.

<sup>2</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, July 30, 1775.

wick [Dorchester?]. Many went off in disgust that nothing was done; the different parishes sent them back; they stated the case of their desertion. Finding the zeal of the troops so great, and that notwithstanding the threatening of the proclamation, we were not likely to feel the effects of those *who bear the sword* so soon as was expected, it was resolved to force General Gage to an action; with this view it was determined to seize possession of the height on the peninsula of Charles-Town, which General Gage had occupied before the 19th of April, and erect some batteries on Banhin-hill [Bunker-hill], to batter down the town and General Gage's camp on the common and his entrenchment on Boston neck (which you know is only about three fourths of a mile across); 4000 men commanded by General Putnam, and led on by Dr. Warren, having prepared every thing for the operation as well as could be contrived or collected were stationed under a half unfinished breastwork and some palisadoes fix'd in a hurry. When the enemy were landed, to the number of 2500, as we are since informed, being the light infantry and the grenadiers of the army with a compleat train of artillery, howitzers and field pieces, drawn by 200 sailors, and commanded by the most gallant and experienced officers of the last war; they marched to engage 3000 provincials, arrayed in red worsted caps and blue great coats, with guns of different sizes, few of which had bayonets, ill-served artillery, but of invincible courage! The fire from the ships and artillery of the enemy was horrid and amazing; the first onset of the soldiers was bold and fierce, but they were received with equal courage; at length the 38th regiment gave

way, and the rest recoiled. The King's troops were commanded by General Howe, brother to that gallant Lord Howe to whose memory the province of Massachusetts's Bay erected a statue; he marched with undaunted spirit at the head of his men; most of his followers were killed round his own person. The King's troops about this time got into much confusion and retreated; they were rallied by the reproaches of General Howe, and the activity of General Clinton who then joined the battle. The King's troops again made their push against Charles-Town, which was then set on fire by them, our right flank being then uncovered, two floating batteries coming in by the mill dam to take us in the rear, more troops coming from Boston, and our ammunition being almost expended, General Putnam ordered the troops on the left to retreat; the confusion was great for twenty minutes, but in less than half an hour we fell into compleat order; the regulars were so mauled they durst not pursue us 200 yards; almost the last shot they fired they killed good Dr. Warren, who had dressed himself like Lord Falkland,<sup>1</sup> in his wedding suit, and distinguished himself by unparalleled acts of bravery during the whole action, but particularly in covering the retreat; he was a man of great courage, universal learning, and much humanity. It may well be said he is the greatest loss we have sustained. General Putnam, at the age of 60, was as active as the youngest officer in the field. We have lost 104 killed, and 306 wounded; a Lieutenant Colonel and 30 men

<sup>1</sup> Lucius Cary, 2nd Viscount Falkland, at the battle of Newbury, Sept. 20, 1643, dressed himself in clean linen as one going to a banquet and rode into the thick of the fight to be killed.



are prisoners; we anxiously wait their fate; if there are any severity used the war will become most horrid. — We lost before the action began 18 men by the fire of the ships and the battery from Boston; these were burried before the assault. The number of the King's troops killed and wounded are three times our loss. A sailor belonging to one of the transports, who was busy with many of his companions in rifling the dead, and who has since deserted, assured me the ground was covered with officers. The cannon was dreadful. The King's troops began firing at a great distance, being scarce of ammunition deferred our fire. It was impossible to send troops from Roxburgh, because we expected an attack there, or at Dorchester neck. I am well informed many of the old English officers are since dead.

When General Gage had the inhabitants of Boston pent up in the town, not less than five hundred marksmen at different times went out in dung carts covered with dirt to join the army, and carried off 10 or 12,000 cartridges of ammunition by the same means, without being discovered. On the 19th two beautiful young men, between 25 and 30 years of age, devoted themselves to death. They marched within General Gage's centinels on the neck; a sergeant and six men were sent to receive them, thinking they came to lay down their arms; when they approached they told the troops "the King's ministers had treated them as slaves, the King's officers had reported them as cowards, that they came to shew the falsity of both reports and the weakness of the proclamation, by sealing with their blood their firm belief in the justice of their cause, upon which they were ready imme-



diately to appear before the presence of God." Here they fired and killed two of the enemy; they were immediately fired at again, and one was instantly killed and the other desperately wounded, but he told the King's troops he did not desire to live, and demanded they should kill him also, which was soon complied with.<sup>1</sup> I do declare as a man of veracity, under all the hardships our people have undergone, I have not heard one complain of his personal suffering; they bewail each others misfortunes! they complain bitterly of the cruelties of the English administration! they lament the separation of the empire which is likely to take place, but of their own particular sufferings no man murmurs or complains. Not a soldier dies of his wounds who does not believe he goes directly to heaven, notwithstanding all the anathemas of the general proclamation. If this business continues 'till November you will have an account of ships and troops. If we could have imagined the Parliament of England could have been so infatuated as appears by their proceedings of last session of Parliament, we should certainly have destroyed the small few then in this province.

*Extract of a letter from an officer in Putnam's army, to an English merchant, dated June 27, 1775.*<sup>2</sup>

When the last reinforcement, consisting of four regiments from Cork, No. 22, 40, 44, 45, arrived at New-

<sup>1</sup> The following is another account of the incident: "Two men came in as far as Brown's House, where a Serjeant and a Party was sent to meet them, as it was thought they wanted to deliver themselves up, but when the party got near, the two men fired and run away, but were shot by the Party and their arms brought in." "Diary of a British Officer in Boston in 1775," *Atlantic Monthly*, xxxix, p. 551.

<sup>2</sup> *London Evening Post*, Aug. 8-10, 1775.

York, they found orders for Boston, being, it was imagined, both ashamed and afraid from their weakness to attempt landing. On their joining the shattered remains of Gage's army, his soldiers were quite dismayed, finding a miserable relief of only 1100 disheartened men; so that it may be said, through this disappointment, the Mercenaries are in a worse state than before, more especially as they have no prospect of receiving more troops before the season for action is over. We look upon this as a *Scotch cause*, fathered by Lords Bute and Mansfield; for by what we hear from all quarters, we have not a single friend among that people; and they are sneering, while we are cutting each others throats.

*By a private letter from New York, the following accounts are received:*<sup>1</sup>

The congress is greatly divided. The republican party in that meeting, headed by Adams, is extremely violent. Dickinson, the author of the *Pennsylvania Farmer*, is moderate, and totally averse to independency. There is a jealousy between Peyton Randolph, and Hancock, and party dissensions in consequence. All the well-disposed in the congress towards the real interest of America were averse to the invasion of Canada; they dread the consequences. In short, the whole congress is in the utmost confusion. One of the most violent has declared he had rather be anything than a congress-man.

In the city of New York the labouring poor and the seamen are extremely clamorous, and the well-

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, Nov. 18-21, 1775.

affected to government begin to declare their sentiments, in defiance of congressional inquisitions.

Some of the most respectable Gentlemen of Philadelphia and New York cities declare themselves deceived by the intelligence they have received from false friends in England.

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup>*

I will answer your inquiries about the possibility of America resisting Great Britain in the best manner I can. The ministry in England have been uniformly deceived by the reports of all their America Governors; the resistance these governors meet with, naturally has the effect of sowing resentment in their minds, and their dispatches to the ministry in England are tinctured with it. Had your government made a practice of employing some ingenious private individuals for the purpose of sending intelligence they would have known the consequences of the late measures better. This continent without trade or fisheries, and a ruined agriculture will be a continent of soldiers, and the more our evils multiply, the more powerful will our armies be; every act of the British parliament which deprives a class here of their bread at once sends them to the camp. It is plain, there they must go or starve. Thus, Sir, we shall never want men, the present situation of the continent will multiply our soldiers faster than they are wanted. What you say of their pay is very erroneous: Much the greatest part of the year they will receive none — the most numerous part of the forces will be in arms for food and existence, such men are desperate and will there-

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, Aug. 24, 1775.

fore fight to the last. But you are deceived if you think heavy taxes will not be paid here. If the Congress issues a Continental paper currency, it will be instantly as current as gold; and it will enable them to tax us as much as they please: this it is said will certainly be done. Your last difficulty is that of arms and ammunition, but we have both in plenty, and ships have landed great quantities in various parts of the coast within these two months, add to which we have nine several manufactories at work in fabricating artillery and small arms.

*Transcript of a genuine letter from Virginia, Rappahannoc River, July 1, 1775.<sup>1</sup>*

*Dear Sir,*

I suppose you will be much surprised when you find that you have not received any letter from me by Captain Dobbie, by whom I fully intended to have sent you a few hams and some dried fruit, but he sailed sooner than I expected, and never had the opportunity of seeing him while he was in the country, notwithstanding he was twice within half a mile of my house; as soon as I heard of his arrival I wrote to him, desiring that he would enquire for two hhds. of your tobacco at Fredericksburg, which your tenant promised last fall he would have ready for you by the spring, but Captain Dobbie wrote me that there was no tobacco there for you. I suppose the tenant is of the same opinion that most of the inhabitants of this country are, that is, not to pay any debts till the American grievances are redressed; and as our courts are entirely shut, there is no way to compell people

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Aug. 21, 1775.



to pay who don't incline. Your affairs are just in the same situation as when I wrote you last, and God knows when they will be otherwise, as the people in general seem at this time preparing for death, or to be free, rather than pay their debts and submit to the impositions of Parliament. It would really surprise you to see the preparations making for our defence, all persons arming themselves, and independent companies, from 100 to 150 men in every county of Virginia, well equipped and daily endeavouring to instruct themselves in the art of war, in order [to] oppose any forces that shall be sent here; this has been the case ever since the battle of Boston, and I can positively affirm, that in a few days an army of at least 7 or 8 thousand well-disciplined men might be got together, (well armed) for the protection of this country; and from the best information I can get, the Northern Colonies have forces far superior to this country, so that you may depend there will be many most bloody battles before the Americans will give up their liberties. I am afraid the scheme of Parliament will be the ruin of the British constitution, for should they at last reduce the Americans, (which I much doubt) I am sure that it will so weaken the British power that they must become a prey to some other nation, for I am sure that America never will submit while there are a sufficient number of its inhabitants left as will make the appearance of an army, so that the King will have but few subjects left here, and those few, perhaps, not well attached to his person. When you traded here you well knew it to be the ambition of the people of this country to endeavour who should be best dressed with the British manufactures,



but they are now quite on the contrary extreme, for their glory now is, to dress in their own manufacture, for you may be well assured that many people, who a few years ago would not wear a shirt of less value than 2s. 6d. or 3s. sterling per yard, now put on a cotton shirt of their own manufacture, and the example is daily followed by all ranks of people here: you may see from this how scandalous our G—— [Governor] has been in informing the ministry that we could not subsist more than one or two years without the assistance of the British manufactory. I hope he and every such — who has been the cause of the present disturbances will be brought to condign punishment. Instead of our fields being planted with tobacco, as usual, they are now flourishing with cotton and flax, and our pastures well stored with sheep; so I think there will not be the least danger of our suffering for want of clothes. I heartily wish you and your family all happiness, and I pray God that the disputes now subsisting between the Colonies and Britain may be speedily settled for the interest of both, and am, Dear Sir,

Your Friend and Kinsman.

P.S. We have made a great progress in this Colony in making gunpowder, so that it is supposed we need not apply to Britain for that article at a future day.

*Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman of Boston, but obliged now with his family to take refuge in Philadelphia, dated July 3.<sup>1</sup>*

On the 18th of April General Gage sent out a party of soldiers from Boston, consisting of 12 or 1300, in

<sup>1</sup> *Bristol Gazette*, Aug. 24, 1775.

order to destroy a provincial magazine at Concord, which is about 20 miles from Boston: who, meeting with a small number of provincial troops at Lexington, first fired upon them, and thus brought on an engagement, which lasted till night; in which the regulars sustained a considerable loss, and retreated with great precipitation. And had the people had time to have alarmed the country, and to have collected their militia, it is probable that the retreat of the regulars would have been totally cut off. But they marched in the night, in the most secret manner, out of Boston; and on their return, while pursued by a small body of provincials, they made the greatest haste. In the first fire the British troops made on the poor people at Lexington, they killed eight men. The news of this inhuman action was soon spread, and in a few days brought together 20 or 30,000 men; who surrounded Boston, and shut in the British soldiers, and cut off all supplies of fresh provisions. Since which the Continental Congress have fixed a standing army, who are all enlisted, and paid by the continent, and are under strict military discipline. This army consists at present of about 17 or 20,000 men; besides which number, there are 20 or 30,000 farmers who hold themselves ready to march at a minute's warning to the assistance of the regular continental army. The standing army is composed of men from the different colonies. Besides these men, every province has a separate army for their own defence; which is paid by each government; who are to march where ordered; and all the yeomanry are under arms, as a militia, who are to appear as necessity requires. All the associated provinces are in arms; business gives way

to military preparations. The Hon. George Washington, a gentleman of great fortune, and an amiable character, both private and public, and who behaved bravely and judiciously the last war in this country, is appointed Generalissimo of the American forces, and is now at the grand army round Boston. General Ward is the second in command. General Lee, who has been in the service of several of the European powers, is third in command; he has renounced his half-pay from our King, in the public prints. General Putnam is the fourth, and Mr. Skuyler the fifth. These gentlemen are to act in different parts of the continent, if the civil war should become general; which I pray God to prevent. Two other gentlemen, who have been brought up in the British army, and behaved well, have accepted appointments in the American army.<sup>1</sup> — The manufacture of saltpetre among us goes on fast, and the powder mills are daily at work. Nothing but war is talked of. Interest is thought little of, compared with freedom; and the thousands who inhabit this vast continent determine not to survive the loss of it. There cannot be less than an hundred and fifty thousand men this day in arms in America. But independence is not the desire of this people: they ask nothing more than to be placed in the condition they were in when his late Majesty died.

Every measure of administration has tended more and more to the union of the colonies. The stoppage of Boston harbour has alarmed the other colonies with a prospect of what they are to suffer, unless they submit to every measure of government. The battle at Lexington, which was begun by the British troops,

<sup>1</sup> Richard Montgomery and Horatio Gates.

their killing eight of our people, who had not opposed them, has made the very men who were called friends of government join the popular side. The restraining, or fishery bill, as it prevents 15,000 hardy men from getting their living in their usual way, now turn into the army. This bill has made many converts to the American cause. Crown Point and Ticonderoga have been lately taken by a party of Connecticut troops, and the fort is now repaired and reinforced with 1500 men. Thus the passage to the westward is in the hands of the Americans. The Indians of the different tribes determine to maintain a neutrality. I conversed an hour on this subject with a gentleman who is now here express from the Indians to the Congress. — There have been two battles since that at Lexington; one on Hog and Noddle's Islands, the other at Charles-Town, close to Boston: in the former the provincials made great havock among the British soldiers, and burnt one sloop of war, but lost not one man. The account of the latter I will inclose, if I can procure it. We have an uncommon year of plenty; and as all exports will soon be cut off we shall have more provisions than we can make use of. The continental army is to be kept within bounds, and to be increased as reinforcements arrive from England. — The King's troops have burnt to ashes the beautiful town of Charles-Town, consisting of three or four hundred houses.

Thus, my dear Sir, have I given a history of the present state of affairs in this country; supposing that you would be anxious to know how things are going on; and such intelligence as, I think, you may depend on in general; which I have taken pains to collect. I



know that many persons have been diligent in their attempts to deceive our brethren in England; and they have too far succeeded. Make what use you please of this letter. For I think, if our brethren with you knew the truth of things, we should be likely to settle this unhappy and unnatural controversy soon. Oh! that God would soon appear to bring about an honourable and lasting union between Great Britain and these colonies. I am driven from Boston, from my interest and connections, and have taken refuge in Philadelphia; where, with my numerous family, I meet with many friends. I left my house with its furniture just as I lived in it, a few things excepted.

*Extract of a letter from a Merchant of Philadelphia, to his friend at Islington, July 4.*<sup>1</sup>

Business here is at a total stand, as every person both young and old are learning the military exercise, in which they have acquired great dexterity; we have in this city three battalions, three companies of Light Infantry, one company of Rangers, and one of Light Horse; which are composed of the principal Merchants and Traders of this place; for my own part I take great pleasure (being emulated from so many noble characters round me) in learning the exercise with them, which we perform every day upon a fine common near the city, with an almost enchanting wood at the back of us, where we regale ourselves after we are done. We have 2000 men besides, ready to turn out upon the shortest notice: The whole of this city and Colony are resolute to a man, to oppose the invasion of our liberties; and are determined to

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Aug. 16-18, 1775.



lose our lives, sooner than consent to the least abatement of the privileges granted us, by a graciously provident God in our charters.

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, July 5.<sup>1</sup>*

*Esteemed Friend,*

I am much gratified by the approbation of my political sentiments, which, in general, are not quite warm enough for the present meridian of America; but things are now driven to such extremities, that even moderate men have nothing to say by way of palliation. Neither justice nor humanity stay the proceedings of an infatuated, deluded Ministry, who are embruining their hands in the blood of the most faithful of his Majesty's subjects; for I will venture to assert, that the Americans, to a man, are well affected to the reigning family, without the least tincture of Jacobitism about them; but it seems it is a crime that they should dare to be free.

The sword is now drawn, and the best blood of the colonists will flow to support their cause; it is in vain you attempt a conquest by force of arms; you may ruin the fortunes, but you can never reduce the spirits of the Americans. If England can find a vent for her manufactures in Europe, she may possibly withstand the shock her rulers are preparing for her; but if that fails, she must either ingloriously submit to her colonies, like a weak and petulant parent, or fall beneath a weight of pride and folly, an object of instruction and derision to the world.

I shall not trouble thee with the particulars of the engagement of the 17th of June; you must have

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Aug. 25, 1775.

heard, before this arrives, of the savage bravery of the British troops at Boston. The unjustifiable conflagration of the village of Charles Town, consisting of about 350 houses, would for ever wither the laurels of their intrepid and successful attack, had it even been against an enemy; but when Englishmen are opposed to Englishmen in horrid civil war, where is the eye that can withhold a tear, at the mutual carnage? One thousand British soldiers lay weltering in their gore before the trenches were forced, and then the wretched remains were so dismayed at the scene, that they declined a pursuit; the flower of the army may lay their bones in America, but the colonists will still, with recruited numbers, maintain the dispute; they are now waiting within a mile of the regulars for a second attack, unless General Washington (Generalissimo) should order them to retire four or five miles from Boston, as it is said the Congress have advised.

Matters are now become very serious; we no longer act under cover, but openly prepare for defence. Our Assembly have granted 35,000 l. voted men, and appointed a committee of safety, consisting of twenty-five, to take charge of the defence of the Province, the Governor is out of the question; we are obliged to travel out of the old road of consti[tu]tion and cruel necessity is our plea. — May Heaven send wiser rulers, and better hearts, is the earnest wish of

Thy affectionately obliged friend.

P.S. The Congress have voted two millions of dollars to be immediately struck in paper, and sunk in seven years by a tax on estates.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The resolutions read as follows:

“Resolved, That a sum not exceeding 2 millions of Spanish milled dol-

*Extract of a Letter from Philadelphia, dated July 5.<sup>1</sup>*

Never was there such firmness and union among the inhabitants of any country as now appears through the twelve United Provinces. Our most cautious and cunning Politicians have at last declared themselves in favour of the American cause; I suppose on the full assurance that we shall certainly prevail. Even Dr. Smith,<sup>2</sup> the Provost of our College, who seldom stands in his own light, is become a flaming Patriot. He preached the other day from Joshua xxii and ver 22. "The Lord God of Gods, the Lord God of Gods he knoweth, and Israel he shall know if it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the Lord, save us not this day." His colourings and similes were strong. In a few days Mr. Duke preaches a fit discourse before the Militia, in order to animate them. I take this for an omen of good. It is a proof that *tempora mutantur*; and I hope that every vessel will bring you fresh proofs that our cause is the cause of heaven.

*Extract of a Letter from Messrs. Bradford, of Philadelphia, to the Printer of a Public Paper, dated Philadelphia, July 8, 1775.<sup>3</sup>*

By the papers you will find that we are forced into a war with our brethren of Great Britain; you will also

lars be emitted by the Congress in bills of Credit for the defence of America.

"Resolved, That the twelve confederated colonies be pledged for the redemption of the bills of credit now directed to be emitted." *Journal of Congress*, June 22, 1775.

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, Aug. 22-24, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> The Reverend William Smith, of the College of Philadelphia, now the University of Pennsylvania.

<sup>3</sup> *London Chronicle*, Aug. 17-19, 1775.

find that an over-ruling Providence covered our heads at the Lexington, Noddle Island, and Bunker's Hill actions; our people have not in those three battles lost more than 100 killed and about 200 wounded, whereas the ministerial troops have at least lost 1500 killed, and 1000 wounded.

In the affair of Bunker's Hill, it is asserted by many respectable people, who have since the action got out of Boston, that the Welch fusileers have only one Captain and ninety men left out of the whole regiment, and that General Gage has lost four Colonels and three Majors, among whom are Col. Nesbit, Majors Pitcairn and Sheriff. However the ministerial account may gloss over matters, their loss has been such that a few more such victories would leave Gage but few men, and we should joyfully put up with the disgrace of a retreat every day for a month on the same terms.

Tell Lord Sandwich, that Lord Howe says, the rebels fought more like devils than men, and that if our reinforcement had come up in time he must have been totally defeated.

Our Congress are still sitting, and likely to sit for some time; seeing they were involved they have taken all the necessary steps; they have an army of 18,000 or 20,000, headed by Gen. Washington, around Boston, who are well armed and have magazines sufficient for two years, notwithstanding the steps taken to keep warlike stores from cowards and poltroons, who had only broomsticks and rusty guns.

You may likewise tell his Lordship, that our army is able to cope with 30,000 such troops as Gage now commands, and that we should be glad to see his Lordship at the head of them.



No power ever armed so many men in so short a time as has been done in this country; it is computed that we have now above 300,000 men well armed, two thirds of whom will fight from principle.

This province has raised 1000 rifle-men, the worst of whom will put a ball into a man's head at a distance of 150 or 200 yards, therefore advise your officers who shall hereafter come out to America, to settle their affairs in England before their departure.

We are well assured that the Ministerial tools in this country have been tempting the Indians to fall on our frontiers, and in one province it has been proved that they have endeavoured to set the negroes on their masters; such hellish designs are carrying on by those wretches as must make any thing but the deliv or L—— N—— [Lord North] and his tools hide their heads.

We are, Sir, your's, &c.

W. and T. BRADFORD.

*Extract of a letter from a Gentleman at New-York to a Merchant in London, dated July 8.*<sup>1</sup>

Since my arrival here, which is about six months, I have met with surprising success, for I have got in most of the money due me, and for others who empowered me to settle their affairs; and I doubt not, but in six months more, every shilling will be paid me. They are stigmatized on your side the water with being a set of crafty, designing, unprincipled people; but I affirm, that I never was among any Gentlemen of stricter honour and veracity than the New York Merchants are.

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Aug. 16-18, 1775.



*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, dated July 10, 1775.<sup>1</sup>*

Travel through whatever part of this country you will, you see the inhabitants training, making fire-locks, casting mortars, shells, and shot, and making saltpetre, in order to keep the gun-powder mills at work during the next autumn and winter. Nothing, indeed, is attended to but preparing to make a vigorous defence. A prodigious number of men are now in arms, and well trained, ready to march whenever wanted for the support of American freedom and property. In short, a spirit of enthusiasm for war is gone forth, that has driven away the fear of death; the magazines of provisions and ammunition, by order of the Twelve United Colonies, are directed to be made in all proper places, against the next campaign.

*A Midshipman on board his Majesty's ship Otter writes thus to his friends:<sup>2</sup>*

July 11, off Cape Charles, a boy from the Jersey came on board, with an account that the Rebel army, which is come down to York, in Virginia, had taken our men, who were on shore, prisoners. Upon this, our Lieutenant ordered me off to enquire into the matter. I walked up [to] their camp, which consisted of a few pales covered with leaves, and found two hundred rebels round our men, whom they had been informed belonged to the Otter; and at my arrival vowed, that if they caught any belonging to the Fowey man of war, they would never let them go. I enquired the reason why they detained the men, and was asked to whom they belonged; I answered to the King. The Captain of the Guard then asked me if I belonged to

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, Aug. 19-21, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, Aug. 24, 1775.

the Otter and if any of the men or officers would venture on shore again. I told him, that both officers and men would, if they were ordered, come on shore on any duty. They said they hoped they would behave themselves well, or they would get something they did not like. I replied that if saying they belonged to the King was impertinent, it was the answer they must always expect. Thus you see that the people of York, in Virginia, are worse than at Boston.

*Extract of a letter from Cambridge, July 12.<sup>1</sup>*

The day before yesterday we went to Chelsea, famous for the battle of Noddle-Island near to it; while we were on Powder Horn Hill, back of Chelsea, we saw a skirmish between a party of our people, (120 in number,) who went in whale boats, to an island about twelve miles from Boston, and burnt a large quantity of hay, which was put into bundles by the Regulars, and intended to be sent to Boston for their horses. A great number of marines in schooners, men of war's boats, and two ships of war, kept up a constant fire on our men, while they remained on the island; but this did not prevent them from destroying the hay. The schooner and boats endeavoured to cut off their retreat, which brought on a very warm engagement, in which we had one killed and one wounded. The loss of the Regulars is not known, but supposed to be considerable, as they were drove off several times, and finally obliged to retire, which would not have been the case if they had not lost some men.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Sept. 4-6, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> Probably Colonel Greateon's expedition to Long Island, which, according to Frothingham, occurred July 12. This letter is probably incorrectly dated.

Yesterday we spent in Roxbury; — while there, were amused with a heavy fire of cannon and mortars, from the lines of the Regulars on the Neck, and from one of their floating batteries, against 200 of our men, who were throwing up a breastwork in front of the George Tavern on the same Neck, and within a few yards of the Regulars advance guard; our people kept on their work and never returned a shot. Three bombs burst near our men, without injuring them; most of the cannon shot were taken up and brought to the General. It is diverting to see our people contending for the balls as they roll along.

During a severe cannonade at Roxbury, last week, a bomb, thirteen inches in diameter, fell within our line, and burnt furiously; four of our artillery men ran up, and one kicked out the fuse, and saved the bomb, probably some lives, — a stroke of heroism worthy of record. I heard the man's name yesterday, but now forget it. The Regulars have so hardened our people by their repeated firing, that a cannonading is just as much minded there as a common thunder shower. All things look well; we are now strongly posted, so are the Regulars. I believe neither side are willing to attack each other in their lines.

We have just got over land from Cape Cod, a large fleet of whale boats; in a day or two we shall man them in Cambridge and Mystick Rivers, and try to keep our enemy's boats from insulting us.

The Regulars do not seem willing to come out, but our people are continually provoking them.

*Extract of a letter from Norfolk, Virginia, July 19.*<sup>1</sup>

The people all over America are determined to die or be free; and as they have taken up arms, are determined never to lay them down till the acts are repealed. — The general uniforms are made of brown Osnaburghs, something like a shirt, double caped over the shoulder, in imitation of the Indians, and on the breast, in capital letters, is this motto, LIBERTY OR DEATH.<sup>2</sup> Excuse my writing on so small and coarse a piece of paper, as there is none to be had here at any price.

*A Description of the Situations of the two Armies at Boston, in a letter from the American Camp at Cambridge, dated July 21.*<sup>3</sup>

The Enemy (the King's Troops) are situated on Bunker's and Breed's Hills, both on the Peninsula where the late town of Charlestown stood, and within reach, and under the cover of the guns, from the batteries in the town of Boston, and the ships in the Harbour, and of a number of floating batteries, which they have built, that carry two guns in their bows, two in their sterns, and one on each side. Our people are situated from Charles-River, about 200 rods below College, where we have a redoubt, which begins the line; then about 60 rods from that another redoubt, and lines continued near 100 rods; then at Charlestown road on the west side of the road, at the

<sup>1</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, Sept. 16, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> This was the uniform of the riflemen, or shirtmen as they were sometimes called because of their long hunting frocks, so different from the conventional uniforms of the European soldiers. Osnaburghs are coarse linens from Osnabruck in Germany.

<sup>3</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Sept. 25-27, 1775.



foot of Prospect-Hill, another redoubt, and strong fortification; then, on Prospect-Hill, is Putnam's Post, a very strong fortification; then between that and Winter-Hill, a redoubt. On Winter-Hill, a strong citadel, and lines, over Charlestown Road to Mistick; then in Mr. Temple's pasture, a strong redoubt, that commands to Mistick-River, so that we have a compleat line of circumvallation from Charles-River, to Mistick-River; our main fortress on Prospect-Hill; the Enemy's main fortress on Bunker's-Hill, within cannon-shot of each other; a hill between these two Posts, a little to the eastward of Prospect-Hill, called Cobble-Hill, I expect will soon cost us a Squabble, which shall have it, our people or their's; nor do I expect it will be many days before the contest begins, which will probably bring on a general engagement; if they let us alone four or five days more, we shall be well prepared, and shan't care how soon they come, the sooner the better. At Roxbury side the Enemy have dug across the Neck, and let the water through, and our people in turn have entrenched across the outer end of the Neck, and are strongly fortified there; and on the hill by the Meeting-house, so strong, that I believe every man in Boston, and at Bunker's and Breed's Hills must fall, before they could force a passage that way into the country.

*Extract of a Letter from an Officer of the Fleet.*<sup>1</sup>

BOSTON, July 25, 1775.

This country, by the hasty strides she made towards perfection, would have soon been the wonder and mistress of the world; but this unnatural civil war will

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Sept. 28, 1775.



plunge every thing in horror and destruction, and throw the colonies 200 years backward. Perhaps the tree was too luxuriant and this pruning may invigorate its trunk. But now all is a miserable reverse of plenty, joy, and felicity; cultivation is neglected; the plough-share is turned into a sword; commerce is restrained; villages and towns are laid in ashes; families that lived in plenty are reduced to beggary; and parents, wives and children robbed of those from whom they drew their sustenance. The blockade of Boston, having occasioned a great scarcity of every thing, tenders were fitted and dispatched from every ship; and *Mr. James Moore* was appointed to command that vessel which went from the flag-ship. Sometime in May he sailed for *Machias*, about 80 leagues from hence eastward, to recover some guns which were lost in a wrecked schooner: at the same time he had two sloops under his convoy to load with wood for the use of the fleet and the garrison. In performing this business he was severely attacked by the Provincial troops from the shore, which he beat off with some loss on both sides; however they armed two sloops and when the tender attempted to go off they pursued her, and began a second engagement with more vigour than before: in this conflict *Mr. Moore* was wounded in three places, and was carried off the deck, desiring the people to maintain the fight gallantly to the last: but the want of his presence to animate them, greatly altered the circumstance, and the survivors submitted to the foe. The brave young man was killed with three of his men and three wounded, tho' he laid till the succeeding day before he expired. While he lived his activity, sobriety,

sensibility, honour and courage, made him respected and admired; he died on the point of preferment, a loss to his country and the naval service; and he is now universally lamented by the Admiral and the fleet, and by his shipmates in particular; for few young men had such merits to boast of, and fewer leave this world with so exemplary a character.

*Extract of a genuine letter from Boston, dated July 25, 1775.<sup>1</sup>*

As far as I can guess from a matter not perfectly known, we at present are worse off than the rebels. In point of numbers they so far surpass us, that we are like a few children in the midst of a large crowd. Trusting to this superiority, they grow daily more and more bold, menacing us most insolently; and we fear when the days shorten, and dark nights come on, they'll put some of their threats in execution, unless other reinforcements and a fleet of war arrive soon. They know our situation, as well as we do ourselves, from the villains that are left in town, who acquaint them with all our proceedings, making signals by night with gunpowder, and at day, out of church steeples. About three weeks ago three fellows were taken out of one of the latter, who confess they had been so employed for seven days. Another was caught last week swimming over to the rebels with one of their General's passes in his pocket. He will be hanged in a day or two. Since we have been here we have been reinforced by four regiments; but many of the men are very ill with fluxes, occasioned by the bad water which they got on landing, and the want of fresh provisions. No action has happened since

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Sept. 11, 1775.

## NANTASKET LIGHTHOUSE BURNED 175

the 17th of June; a few shot have been exchanged by scouting parties; one morning they beat in our advanced guard, and burnt the guard-house; and on the 19th instant they set fire to the light-house<sup>1</sup> and one of our men of war lying but a mile from it; as it was calm we could not get at them, their whale-boats, in which they made their escape, out-rowing any of our boats, and a small island lying between them and the ship, prevented her firing on them. They took from the light-house a six-pounder and a swivel.

*The following is an exact copy of a letter received from an officer at Boston. . . .*<sup>2</sup>

BOSTON, July 30.

Dear Sir,

In my last I gave you a particular account of the obstinate and bloody action at Bunker's-hill on the 17th of June; since that time nothing material has happened; and from the many reports propagated by our Generals, to persuade the Americans that the Ministry are disposed to listen to terms of accommodation, I am clearly of opinion, that nothing further will be attempted by us, till we have received a considerable reinforcement of artillery, bombs, mortars, grenades, &c. When they arrive here, 'tis said the fate of America will be decided, and that troops will be perpetually quartered in every town on the continent, to enforce submission, and promote the designs of administration. With regard to your questions, whether the regulars set fire to Charles-Town, as was

<sup>1</sup> Nantasket lighthouse was burned by a party under Major Vose, of General Heath's regiment.

<sup>2</sup> *London Evening Post*, Sept. 16-19, 1775.

given out, and an army of Roman Catholics and wild Indians are to be let loose on our Protestant friends, and their poor defenceless wives and children, who are driven into the wilderness for security from British violence? I am sorry truth obliges me to answer them in the affirmative; and must confess that the consideration of such unnatural and unexampled proceedings, have made thousands sick of the service, apprehensive that God and man will declare against us. Till my arrival here, I acknowledge I was ignorant enough to imagine, that the Colonists had renounced their Sovereign, and were actually contending for absolute independence; but I am now convinced, that they desire nothing more than peace, liberty, and safety; and do solemnly affirm, that it is at any time in the Minister's power (as he well knows) to put a period to the calamities of this horrid and ruinous contest, by only complying with the prayer of the American petition, and placing them in the same situation as they were in at the close of the last war. If such a request is too much, in God's name, let him, and his sanguinary colleagues, fight their own battles, and fall a sacrifice to their own temerity. Happy had it been for England, for the Colonies, and for us, had the remonstrances of the City of London,<sup>1</sup> and the advices of the wisest and best men in the kingdom been regarded by the Ministry. Great Britain would then have continued to enjoy all the blessings of peace, and to enrich herself with the encreasing annual millions that the trade of the Colonies af-

<sup>1</sup> On April 5, 1775, the City of London presented a "Remonstrance and Petition to the Throne respecting the Measures adopted with regard to America."



forded her; but by attending to the misrepresentations of an implacable, avaricious Governor,<sup>1</sup> and to the malevolent tales of fugitive placemen and castigated spies, who effect zeal, and bellow loyalty, to advance their interest, she is running headlong to destruction, and nursing vipers in her bosom, that will sting her to death. I am confident, from what I have seen, that the damage already sustained by this country from the operations of the army, cannot be repaired for 50 years to come, and that if they are continued much longer, that the inhabitants will not have it in their power to order any more goods, or to discharge the debts due to our merchants and manufacturers, as long as they live.

This circumstance will most likely be matter of triumph to the Ministry and their pensioned scribes, but I am sure it must excite the pity and indignation of every honest man. What is to become of the poor unhappy families that were wantonly burnt out of Charles-Town, the ensuing winter, God only knows; and how far such acts of outrage and inhumanity are consistent with sound policy, and the religion we profess, the Minister who applauds them, must inform you. For my part I always said and thought, that violent measures would do no good here; and we now find that they have done a great deal of mischief, for the Colonies are so firmly united by them, and become so desperate, that they court death to avoid slavery; and the soldiery are fully convinced of the truth of it, from what they saw at Bunker's-hill, that they will expect to a man, to lay their execrated bones in this country. But should the scurvy, the bloody flux,

<sup>1</sup> Governor Hutchinson.



and the yellow fever, continue to rage in our camp, as it has done for some time past, there will be no occasion for fighting to destroy us; death will make a sufficient and terrible carnage without it. The reason why we have not offered violence to any of the few prisoners we have made, is because we know not how soon we may be made prisoners ourselves; and are afraid, if we set a bad example, that we shall all, if we are captivated, be scalped and cut to pieces; for if you consider the strength and number of the Twelve United Provinces, and that we have not been able to reduce one, when the enemy is within shot of our lines, what can we expect if we venture into the country? The same fate as the army under the brave but unfortunate Braddock, on their march to the Ohio. In a word, as I lately informed our mutual friend, Mr. F——, I am so entirely averse to embroiling my hands in the blood of my distressed fellow-subjects, and find an accommodation, though easy, so obstinately rejected by the Ministry, that I am determined to resign my commission, and return to my native country. I remain, dear Sir, your most obedient and very humble servant.

*Extract of a letter from Watertown, dated July 31.<sup>1</sup>*

Last Wednesday se'nnight embarked from Dorchester Neck, Col. Greateon, with 96 men in ten whale boats for Long Island in order to remove from thence some stock and hay; in his way he was fired upon by men of war lying near said island, but notwithstanding the very heavy fire from the ships, he proceeded, when not finding any stock on the island, he fired the

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, Sept. 22, 1775.

barns, in which was a quantity of hay, he not being able to remove it; as he perceived several barges, cutters, and an armed schooner, coming upon him; having executed his designs, so far as to deprive our enemy of the advantage they might receive from the hay, &c. which he destroyed, he retreated; and when on board he found himself again beset by the savage enemy, who perhaps would have taken some of the hindermost boats, had it not been for the good conduct of the Commander, and a party from Squantum, posted on the shore, who by a warm fire drove off the enemy; they killed one of our men on the shore, and it is asserted by one in a boat that there were two of the enemy killed. The houses caught fire from the barns and were consumed.

Since our last Major Vost and Major Loring have returned from Nantasket, and brought off about 1000 bushels of barley, which they cut. After they had secured the barley and straw, they went and burnt the Light-house, took three boats with four men belonging to Boston, which were fishing; brought off three casks of oil, and about 50 lb. of powder from the Light-house; they then burnt the barn and hay upon the Brewsters. Notwithstanding an almost incessant fire from the men of war and tenders, we had only two men that were slightly wounded.

*Extract of a Letter from Philadelphia, dated August 1, 1775.*<sup>1</sup>

You would hardly conceive, without seeing it, to what a height the political fury of this country is arrived. I most heartily wish myself at home among freeborn Englishmen, not among this tyrannical and

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, Sept. 26-28, 1775.

arbitrary rabble of America. They have made many protestations of respect for England, and of their desire of union with the Mother Country; but you may take my word for it, my dear friend, it is the meanest and basest hypocrisy that ever was assumed. I have had occasion to spend, for a few years past, much of my time in this province; and you may depend upon it, (and I am sure I have neither interest nor wish to deceive you) that the present breach with England is not the device of a day, and has not risen with the question about taxation, (though that has been a favourable plea) but is part of a system which has been forming here, even before the late war. You would feel the indignation I do every day, when I hear my King and country vilified and abused by a parcel of wretches, who owe their very existence to it. I am amazed at the stupor and supineness of your Admiralty. For God's sake what are you doing in England? Are the friends of Great Britain and their property to be left exposed at this rate, to the dictates of an inhuman rabble? I expect, with many others, if I do not join in the seditious and traitorous acts in vogue, to be hauled away and confined in a prison with the confiscation of all I have in the world. Words cannot paint the distress of sober people who have property, and wish for peace and quietness. Where is the boasted Navy of our country, that only one poor sloop is stationed here? Whereas if we had but three ships of war, one of fifty and two of forty guns each, this place would not only be kept in awe, and the friends of Government secured, but a sufficient quantity of provisions might be had at all times for your fleet and army, which, we are informed, are

half starved at Boston. As to the sloop we have here, the *Nautilus*, I fear she will soon go to the shades; for our friends are building above fifty row boats of large dimensions, which are to have a twenty-four pounder in the stern sheets, several swivels in the sides, and plenty of mosquets for the people on board, and all for the purpose of attacking the King's ships that may arrive here. But if Government would order the Navy to sink all these vessels to the bottom wherever they met with them, a few examples of such timely severity would keep them on shore. I must not forget to tell you, that they are smuggling from the French West Indies in pilot boats all the ammunition they can get; but two or three cruizers off the Capes would soon put an end to that business. We have also the rarest coiners alive; for we issue our thousands and tens of thousands upon paper, for which we are obliged to part with our little specie or property, or suffer the vengeance of the omnipotent mob.

Constant news arrives here, daily almost, which keeps up the mad enthusiasm of the people; namely, that an insurrection of thousands has begun in England; that Lord North is fled for his life to France or Italy; that Wilkes,<sup>1</sup> Burke,<sup>2</sup> Governor Johnstone,<sup>3</sup> Lord Elfingham,<sup>4</sup> Arthur Lee,<sup>5</sup> and others, at the head of an armed multitude, had destroyed the Parliament

<sup>1</sup> John Wilkes, member of Parliament for Middlesex and Lord Mayor of London.

<sup>2</sup> Edmund Burke, member of Parliament for Bristol.

<sup>3</sup> George Johnstone, formerly governor of Florida.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Howard, Earl of Effingham, who resigned a captaincy in General Gage's army because he would not bear arms against his fellow countrymen in America.

<sup>5</sup> Colonial Agent for Virginia in London.



House, and several members of the Administration. You would be amazed at the present rejoicings here upon this account. We are told likewise, that the Dutch have about fifty millions in our funds, and that they are about to demand them immediately, which will occasion a total bankruptcy to Great Britain. Every body here believes this, and a hundred times as much more, for Gospel; which, I am well informed, is sent them by a set of people among you, whom humanity should teach not to sport thus with the lives and fortunes of these poor people here. All this increases the arrogance and ferment; and nobody dares to doubt it, unless he chuses to risque his life and substance; at least he must keep his doubts to himself. If this be liberty, Good Lord deliver me from all such liberty! I am sure no tyranny, not even of Spain and Turkey, can exceed it. If our last petition be discarded, which they who made know will be the case, we are determined to set open our ports to the French, Dutch, and Danes. We have already invited them to send their produce here under convoy of ships of war, which we reckon will be opposed by the British fleet; and so we joyfully expect you to be embroiled in a war with one or other of these powers. Many Frenchmen are here, and tho' most of them appear but in a low mode, if I may guess by their mein, they are not all *common people*. We profess loudly, that we would join with French, Spaniards, or any nation, to send you all to the devil. We had a schooner a few days since who brought a considerable quantity of gunpowder stowed under molasses; and when she arrived she hoisted in bravo a French jack, ensign and pendant. If government mean to do any

thing, they must do it quickly, or the contest will be the stronger. I am surprised you do not take and stop all the ships going in or coming out of these ports. Conceal my name; or I should run a great risque of my life and property, were it discovered here that I had sent you any account of these proceedings: Indeed, I incur some danger in writing at all; nor should I, if I could not confide in my conveyance.

*Extract of a Letter by the packet by a Gentleman at New York, Aug. 3.<sup>1</sup>*

Our Worthy and Reverend Pastor, DOCTOR FAT-DUCKS, (the name A——ty<sup>2</sup> goes by, from his having a particular relish for those birds, when well-dressed and in high perfection) hath been secreted on Staten Island for some weeks past; his *detected* letters have, in appearance, humbled him pretty sufficiently! He is at present sequestered in his own house, and as he affects to be very sorry for his ungrateful conduct, it is probable he may escape the *tar and feathers*. Our Congress have given it in express orders to Sam B——d [Bayard], the Deputy Secretary, by no means to remit or cause to be remitted to K——x,<sup>3</sup> his principal in London, a single farthing more for the office, which he hired of him! Is it not a public shame that your *pious* Secretary of State shall have appointed one of his own understrappers in office (who, we are well informed hath employed himself for years past in promoting the disunion which now

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Sept. 30, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> Probably the Reverend Samuel Auchmuty, rector of Trinity Church, New York.

<sup>3</sup> William Knox, the English patentee, whom Bayard superseded. He was Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies.

unhappily prevails between this and the mother country) to be Secretary of this province? which place he farms to B——d for a thousand guineas a year; I thank God, however, that his revenue from *this* province is now, and I trust for ever at an end; to have those who have grown rich with our money by sinecure, places, pensions, and church-living, be the very scoundrels who villify and abuse us most, is too much for flesh and blood to bear.

*Extract of a letter from Cambridge, Aug. 5.*<sup>1</sup>

Since I wrote you last, our troops have had several skirmishes with the enemy, in all of which we have had the better of them. Three hundred men from our army, under the command of Major Tupper, were sent to Light-house Island, on information being given that the King's troops were rebuilding it; the enemy perceiving our people coming, prepared to receive them; our troops were ordered not to fire until they landed, which they did, and went boldly up to the enemy, killed ten or twelve on the spot, among whom was the commanding officer, and took the remainder, about thirty-five in number, demolished the enemy's works, and were preparing to embark, but the tide leaving them, they were obliged to tarry till its return; mean time a large number of boats from the men of war came up in order to reinforce the enemy on the island, and a smart firing from both parties commenced; our troops however got safe back with their prisoners, with the loss of one man killed, and two or three wounded.

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, Oct. 10-12, 1775.

Since the rifle-men arrived,<sup>1</sup> they have killed six or eight officers of distinction on the lines of Charles Town; a son of Lord Holland is also dangerously wounded. We have the names of the officers in camp, but have not them by me in memory, so as to give them to you.

*Extract of a Letter, dated August 10, from a Lady in Boston, to her Friend in Chester.*<sup>2</sup>

We are in the strangest state in the world; surrounded on all sides; the whole country is in arms, and entrenched. We are deprived of fresh provisions — subject to continual alarms and cannonadings; the Provincials being very audacious, and advancing near to our lines, since the arrivals of the Generals Washington and Lee to command them. We are frequently alarmed in the night with the cannonading of the enemy, which, on our side, it is not though[t] proper to return. Believe me, I welcome the dawn of the day every morning, upon finding the town is not in flames. The night of the 19th ult. at Charlestown-Neck, where General Howe commands, an attack was made on our out-posts, and seven of our soldiers were killed and missing; eighty Provincials attacked twelve of them.

Two thousand men from New York, and as many from Virginia, have joined the Provincial army in New England. — It should seem that the Continent

<sup>1</sup> The riflemen from the Southern States attracted much attention on their arrival in Washington's camp after a march of from four to seven hundred miles. They were very skillful marksmen. John Adams wrote, "They are the most accurate Marksmen in the World, they kill with great Exactness at 200 yards Distance." Quoted, *Letters of Members of the Continental Congress*, 1, 134, note.

<sup>2</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Oct. 4, 1775.



is united in opposition to Great Britain, and that the war must be general. Adam's influence still prevails, and rules the General Congress so far as to cause a declaration of war expressly against Great Britain. He is appointed Treasurer General of the United Colonies. We are cut off from a regular communication with the other colonies by post. However it is evident their force is collected here, and levelled against Boston, to destroy it, and the friends and servants of Government.

The enemy's entrenchments are extended many miles, one beyond another, two or three deep. They have plenty of fresh provisions, but want salt to season it. They were short of ammunition, but have got a supply of that and artillery, above forty pieces of cannon and several mortars. It is said they are very sickly, the putrid fever, small-pox, and dysentery prevail amongst them. The transports which were expected are arrived, and General Grant<sup>1</sup> came in the last on the 29th ult. Every body that can is quitting this place; many families are embarking for England to settle there.

We were roused about one o'clock on the 31st ult. in the morning, by the most dreadful cannonading I ever heard. It seemed to be a general attack on all sides round us. It is impossible to convey an idea how terrible it was in the dead of night, with the apprehensions that naturally seize every one, either of the enemy breaking in, or the town being set on fire. It appears that they attempted again to cut off our outposts: upon which Gen. Howe attacked their entrenchments with cannon and bombs on that side;

<sup>1</sup> General James Grant.

and we attacked them in several places,<sup>1</sup> besides, at the same time, all in the dark. The loss was small, the enemy's much greater. They have destroyed (a second time) the light-house this morning,<sup>2</sup> and taken above 50 men from thence. It is said they killed the commanding officer there in cold blood.

*Extract of a letter from an Officer on board his Majesty's sloop Swan, stationed at Rhode Island, dated the 14th of August, 1775.*<sup>3</sup>

Two Gentlemen crossing a ferry at Rhode Island, in their way from Philadelphia to the Eastward, were stopped by Capt. Ayscough, who found several letters in their possession, which were transmitted to Admiral Graves; but I found an opportunity of copying two of them, and herewith send the copies to you, that you may see the real intentions of those miscreants who have misled his Majesty's subjects in North America to commit acts of open Rebellion; and that you may be no longer deceived by the artful publications of those Tories, or give credit to their professions of wishing for Accommodation. There is undoubted proof that both these letters are from Mr. John Adams, a Lawyer at Boston, and one of the Delegates in the Continental Congress.

PHILADELPHIA, 24 July, 1775.

My DEAR,

It is now almost three months since I left you, in every part of which my anxiety about you and the children, as well as our country, has been extreme.

<sup>1</sup> The British attacked the Provincial lines at Sewall's Point, at Roxbury, and at Charlestown.

<sup>2</sup> Major Tupper with a party of about three hundred men destroyed the lighthouse at Nantasket which the British were rebuilding.

<sup>3</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Sept. 18-20, 1775.

The business I have had upon my mind has been as great and important as can be intrusted to one man, and the difficulty and intricacy of it, is prodigious; when fifty or sixty men have a Constitution to form for a great Empire, at the same time that they have a country of fifteen hundred miles extent to fortify, millions to arm and train, a naval power to begin, an extensive commerce to regulate, numerous tribes of Indians to negotiate with, a standing army of twenty-seven thousand men to raise, pay, victual, and officer, I really shall pity those fifty or sixty men.

I must see you ere long — Rice has wrote me a very good letter, so has Thaxter, for which I thank them both — Love to the children.

J. A.

I wish I had given you a compleat History from the beginning to the end of the journey of the behaviors of my Compatriots — No moral tale could equal it — I will tell you in future, but you shall keep it secret — The fidgets, the whims, the caprice, the vanity, the superstition, the irritability of some of us is —.

Addressed to Mrs. Abigail Adams, Braintree.  
To the care of Col. Warren.  
Favoured by Mr. Hitchborne.

PHILADELPHIA, *24th July, 1775.*

SIR

In confidence I am determined to write freely to you this time — a certain great fortune and piddling Genius,<sup>1</sup> whose fame has been trumpeted so loudly, has given a silly cast to our whole doings — we ought to have had in our hands a month ago the whole legislative, executive and judicial of the whole Continent, and have compleatly modelled a Constitution, to have raised a naval power, and opened all our ports wide, to have arrested every friend to Government on the Continent, and held them as hostages for the poor victims of Boston — and then opened the door as

<sup>1</sup> John Dickinson, who, as a result of the publication of this letter, passed Adams on the street without speaking.

wide as possible for peace and reconciliation, after this they might have petitioned, negotiated, and addressed, &c. if they would — Is all this extravagant? Is it wild? Is it not the soundest policy?

One piece of news — Seven thousand weight of powder arrived here last night — We shall send along some as soon as we can — but you must be patient and frugal. —

We are lost in the extensiveness of our field of business — We have a Continental Treasury to establish, a Paymaster to choose, and a Committee of Correspondence, or Safety, or Accounts, or something I know not what that has confounded us all day. —

Shall I hail you Speaker of the House, or Councillor, or what? — What kind of an election had you? — What sort of Magistrates do you intend to make? Will your new Legislative and Executive feel bold or irresolute? Will your Judicial hang and whip, and fine and imprison without scruples? I want to see our distressful Country once more — yet I dread the sight of devastation. —

You observe in your letter the oddity of a great man,<sup>1</sup> he is a queer creature — But you must love his dogs if you love him, and forgive a thousand whims, for the sake of the Soldier and the Scholar. Yours —

Addressed to the Hon. James Warren Esq: Watertown.  
Favoured by Mr. Hitchborne.

N.B. This letter was anonymous, but wrote in the same hand with that addressed to Abigail Adams.

*The following is a GENUINE copy of a letter received from an Officer at Boston.*<sup>2</sup>

Boston, Aug. 18, 1775.

In my last of the preceding month I informed you of my resolution to resign my commission. Since that time I have made no less than three applications to

<sup>1</sup> General Charles Lee.

<sup>2</sup> *London Evening Post*, Oct. 7-10, 1775.



the Generals for that purpose; but all the answer I can obtain is, that my request shall be considered of; if it is complied with, be assured that it will be followed by 20 or 30 more, no less a number of brave, honest brother officers having declared their abhorrence of the inhuman service we are upon, and of the shocking outrages that have been committed. The discontent of our army, occasioned by a scarcity of provisions, the dreadful mortality that has crept into it, and the advancement, insolence, and self-sufficiency of a number of Scotch officers, is inconceivable. This very day several common soldiers were reprimanded, and threatened with the most exemplary punishment, for swearing they ought to be commanded by Englishmen, and that they would not sacrifice their lives in an attempt to butcher their friends and fellow subjects for any interested North Briton upon earth. This is the first instance of the kind; but as there is a general murmur, and too much room for complaint, it is likely to be productive of very serious consequences. Boston, the metropolis of North America (where we now are, and have been so long cooped up) may very justly be termed the grave of England, and the slaughter house of America. Nothing is to be heard in it but execrations and clamour; nothing is to be seen but distractions and melancholy, disease and death. The soldiery, and inhabitants likewise, I am sure have done sufficient penance here for the sins of their whole lives. The latter are all ruined; many that were worth 16 or 20 thousand pounds, have not a sixpence left; and if any one of them in the anguish of his heart, or the bitterness of his soul, dares mutter any thing like resentment for

the loss of his fortune, a distressed family, or a murdered friend, he is immediately thrown into a loathsome prison. If we hear a gun fired upon the Neck, we are all under arms in a moment, and tremble lest the Provincials should force their way into the town, and put us all to the sword for our cruelty at Lexington, and setting fire to the large, ancient and flourishing town of Charlestown. Certainly our conduct at both places was alike inhuman and unjustifiable; and if heaven punishes us for it, it is no more than we deserve. With regard to diet, we are obliged to live on salt beef and salt pork, much the greater part of which is as hard as wood, as lean as carion, and as rusty as the devil. Could we have good beer, it would, in some measure, prevent their pernicious effects and alleviate the hardships we labour under; but that is impossible, our only beverage being new rum or spruce liquor, which soon throws us into the bloody flux, and runs us off our legs in a few days, and has made the remains of our famished army look like so many regiments of skeletons. Could you view our hospitals, and see how fast we drop off, your very heart would bleed within you. Thirty bodies are frequently thrown into a trench at a time, like those of so many dogs, no bell being suffered to toll upon the occasion. But the glorious expedition we are upon, is approved of by an all-wise, all-merciful Ministry; and therefore all must be right. Your news-writers, indeed, have had the modesty to assert, that we are in high spirits, and want for nothing; but unless we have a speedy supply of English flour, sheep, oxen, coals, potatoes, porter, cloaths, &c. we shall perish for want of them; and when the ministry hire trans-

ports for sending the various articles I have enumerated, the nation will know what credit is to be given to their pensioned scribes, and political observation writers. 'Tis well for our Generals that we have no where to run to; for could the men desert, I am of opinion that they would soon be left by themselves; but situated as we are, we must unavoidably live and die together. We have often endeavoured to fall upon the Provincials by surprize; but their vigilance has as constantly frustrated our design. I am glad of it, and sincerely wish with you, that an obstinate, bloody minded Junto might be brought to repentance; for it is much more reasonable that a few desperadoes should be hung up, *ad terrorem*, for an example to posterity; than that the common rights of mankind should be violated, and thousands of innocent people should perish. The frequent patriotic squibs and paragraphs that appear in most of the public papers, furnish an agreeable entertainment to the subaltern officers in general, and to me in particular; but some of our superior ones, who are enemies to truth and such kind of pleasantry, are highly disgusted. A certain General, more distinguished by his breach of promise, or contract with the unfortunate people of this town,<sup>1</sup> than by his humanity, was heard to declare at a coffee-house, that he would write to the Ministry upon the subject immediately, and not only desire them to employ all the venal pens in their power in our favour, but to obtain addresses from every corrupt, high-flying town, borough, and

<sup>1</sup> A reference to the failure of General Gage to keep his agreement with the inhabitants of Boston to allow them to depart the town with their families and effects upon their lodging their arms in Faneuil Hall, or some other convenient place.

county in the kingdom. Whether corruption or jacobitism are really at such an alarming height in England as to facilitate such inglorious, bare-faced schemes, time alone will discover. Some of our soldiers, however, to secure the event, and to prove that they are determined not to be behind hand with the Junto in iniquity, actually encourage a parcel of miscreants (for I will not call them the King's friends) to forge letters from the Delegates of the Continental Congress, which letters are wickedly said to be intercepted, and are to be laid before a righteous parliament, to prove that the colonists are resolved upon independence. A damning proof this, that an accommodation was never intended, and is not now even thought of. To be ingenuous with you, the whole tenour of the letters received from G——r H——n [Governor Hutchinson], and men in office, assert the contrary. All the calamities which the intrigues of the Ministry have brought upon this devoted country, have not softened nor intimidated the Junto in the least; they bid our Chathams, our Camdens,<sup>1</sup> our Effinghams, our merchants, our manufacturers, the City of London, nay the whole English nation defiance; and will, to use their own words, either sacrifice all the troops of Great Britain, or lay America at their feet. But let them not be too sanguine, for they know not the decrees of Providence, nor what a day nor an hour may bring forth. I will not say that it is impossible to enslave the colonies; but I will, and do affirm, that there is a greater probability of their bringing destruction on their own guilty heads, and

<sup>1</sup> Charles Pratt, Earl of Camden, who had made a great speech in favor of the repeal of the Stamp Act.



throwing every thing into a flame at home; for the present expedition is founded in cruelty and oppression; it has already alienated the minds of his Majesty's best subjects in every part of his dominions, and cannot, if there is vengeance in Heaven, or justice upon earth, be continued with impunity.

*Extract of a Letter from Boston, Aug. 19.<sup>1</sup>*

Since my last we have had every day more or less firing on the Charlestown side, but without much damage on either part. We have been very quiet all night, and have had little disturbance through the day, till last Friday, when the following battle royal in the streets drew all our attention, and has since engrossed all our conversation. — Mr. Hallowell,<sup>2</sup> a commissioner of the Customs, had written four letters to Admiral Greaves. The subject of these letters was, it is said, an expostulation with the Admiral for taking forcibly, for his own use, one half of a quantity of hay purchased by the Commissioner on some of the islands, for allowing the other half to pass. The Commissioner meeting the Admiral in Milk-street, who had never thought proper to answer any of the letters, stopped and enquired, why that notice had not been taken of his letters, which he, as a Gentleman, had the right to expect? To this civil question, the Admiral replied in his usual style; and while the Commissioner was whispering a challenge to him, returned a blow on the face. Though Mr. Hallowell was unarmed, the Admiral had recourse to his sword, upon

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, Sept. 21–23, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> Benjamin Hallowell. This encounter is made much of in contemporary newspapers.

which the former rushed upon him, forced it from him, broke it over his knee, and then flung it in Greaves's face; after this they went to it with their fists, but were soon parted. — The Admiral has come off with a black eye. He has not yet proposed a renewal of the battle, probably preserving himself for the Yankies, who have already carried off all his fresh stock, burnt his hay on the islands, and destroyed the light-house twice under his very nose. One of his relations, who expects the first vacant ship, challenged the Commissioner, who replied, he knew no such person as the challenger, but should always defend himself whenever he should be attacked. — In his own department, the Admiral is more hated and despised, if possible, than he is by the army and the rebels. Capt. M—— is waiting to accompany him to England, whenever he shall be recalled; and if the Admiral can rally his spirits, their interview will not end with a boxing match.

*Extract of a letter from an Officer at Boston, dated  
Aug. 19, 1775.<sup>1</sup>*

Bunker's Hill business of the 17th of June, has convinced the provincials so entirely of the irresistible intrepidity of our troops, that they have attempted nothing of any moment since. They have formed a line of contravallation from Mistick River, which runs by Bunker's Hill round to Dorchester, about eight miles in extent, and carry on the Petit Guerre of popping at Centries. We sent a detachment of 100 men, with some transports, to Fisher's Island, which lies off New London, and swept off about 2000 sheep,

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Sept. 29–Oct. 2, 1775.

and 130 head of black cattle, so we have fresh provisions now, and I hope the poor wounded will soon feel the good effects of it. The following notes passed between Putnam and Major Moncrieffe <sup>1</sup> the 8th inst. through Gen. Howe's camp, with a quantity of beef, and some letters for their wounded prisoners, viz.

"General Putnam's compliments to his old friend Major Moncrieffe, is sorry he could no sooner send him some of the comforts of life; he now sends him, (through the hands of Major Bruce) some mutton, beef, and fresh butter, which he begs his acceptance of, with a hearty welcome."

*The Major's Answer*

"Major Moncrieffe's compliments to Col. Putnam, is much obliged to him for his attention, but begs, with respect to him, he would not put himself to the least inconvenience for the future. He is in a very good mess, and would not wish to be distinguished from his brother officers. He obeyed his commands with respect to Mr. Simpson, whom he had not the pleasure of being acquainted with. The beef was delivered to the other prisoners, Phelps being dead. Humanity will always direct him to receive and forward any thing for their use, and, if we abounded ourselves, they would have their share."

<sup>1</sup> Major James Moncrieffe was an uncle of General Montgomery and a brother-in-law of John Jay.

*We give our Readers the following Extract of a letter, written by a private soldier at Boston to his relations here. The simplicity of the stile will sufficiently evince its authenticity; and as such a correspondent could have no interest in deceiving his friends, his information may be safely relied on.*<sup>1</sup>

BOSTON, August 20, 1775.

*Dear Brother and Sister,*

I take this opportunity to write to you by a particular acquaintance, whose name is H——p, at present a reduced old soldier, and has been a serjeant above twenty years. My reason for troubling you at this time is, to let you know the truth of some transactions that have happened here. They are as follow, as near as I can recollect. I was present at the different periods. On the evening of the 18th of April last, about half past ten o'clock, which is a soldier's hour to be in bed, the light infantry to which I belong, and grenadiers, and the whole light infantry and grenadiers in Boston, were ordered to rise out of their beds, and equip themselves immediately with their arms and 36 rounds of powder and ball, which was soon done, and that as silent as possible; when ready, we marched in small parties thro' the several parts of the town, on purpose to prevent the inhabitants from having any suspicion of our leaving the town. But all our precautions were in vain; for the inhabitants rose out of their beds, and set off into the country, and apprized the people there of our leaving the town. However we proceeded through the town in small parties till we all assembled at the west side of the town, where the men of war's boats were ready to receive us. In all haste we got into the boats, and crossed the

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Oct. 31, 1775.



river opposite to Cambridge; we then continued our march farther into the country, until about four o'clock in the morning of the 19th. As we continued our march we could perceive the inhabitants assembling in many parts. As we went along the road, about half past four o'clock, we came near a village called Lexington, where, through a bush, on one side of the road, a country fellow fired a gun on us, the light infantry: but to be plain in my rehearsal of this affair, the poor fellow soon lost his life by it. From that time the firing of small arms continued, till we arrived near to the town called Concord, about twenty-two miles distant from Boston. On a hill near Concord there was assembled a number of people, about 700, at exercise; they were ready prepared for us, being all loaded with powder and ball. We then halted, and looked at them, as cocks might do on a pit before they fight. But it was not our business to wait long looking at them; so we fixed our bayonets, and immediately charged them up the hill, in order to disperse them; but we were greatly mistaken; for they were not to be dispersed so easily, the whole of them giving us a smart fire; but we returned the compliment, and pursued them with charged bayonets till we entered the town of Concord, where we cut down what they call their Liberty Pole. When we had so done, we searched the town, where we found some cannon, and a great many cartridges for cannon; the latter we burnt, and threw the cannon into the river, after we had spiked them. On searching further, we found a great quantity of flour, which we destroyed and threw into the river. Upon this, they assembled in great bodies, and manning every hill

around, so poured into the town upon us, that we were forced to quit Concord. After this we began a retreat back towards Boston; but we were but a poor handful of men, being only about 756, and they were so numerous, that we were not able to withstand them. They manned the hills on every side, and lined the stone walls by the roads in such a manner, that it was almost impossible for us to make a retreat; and in fact we never should have accomplished it (they having such numbers, that they almost surrounded us) but, as God would have it, General Gage took it into his head to send the first brigade to our assistance, with field pieces; the cannon the rebels did not like; but nevertheless they fired so constantly from the hills, the back of stone walls, and out of the houses, so smart upon us, that we were glad to retreat as fast as possible to Boston.

The brigade, being in number about 800, joined us about ten miles distant from Boston, or otherwise we should never have been able to make our retreat good; we should all, except those killed, have been taken prisoners: but after all, we returned to Boston about seven o'clock that evening, with the loss of many a brave soldier, officers not excepted. Our loss might amount to about five hundred killed and wounded; and, by the account we got, the rebels loss amounted to about 900. For my part I got home again safe, without being even wounded: but it had been, perhaps, better for me had I lost a leg or an arm; for, dear brother, I was employ'd in carrying orders backwards and forwards both night and day, besides being in danger of my life a great deal more than any other man. At last, however, Lord Percy,

who commanded the brigade, gave me some brandy out of his canteen, and declared if I was sent any more, I should certainly die with fatigue, if the rebels did not kill me; and further desired me to give his compliments to my Captain, and beg him not to expose me so much: But notwithstanding all this, I was still obliged to go on all dispatches, which has been the occasion of my long sickness; and God knows whether I shall ever get the better of it, as I really believe I am in a decay. At present I am in the hospital and in a likely way of continuing there.

On the 17th of June last we had another attack with the rebels at a place called Charles Town Heights, where we had very smart work both sides. The rebels had a battery of cannon and intrenchments, almost impossible for any troops to take; but to stand looking at their batteries, breast-works, &c. would not do our business. 'Twas not for that we went there; therefore we soon began to ascend the heights, and the rebels began the fire, which was as warm as any we ever had at the taking of Quebec, or any other place, last war. To conclude, we took their fortifications and battery, and beat them entirely off that ground, which we have still in our possession. But it cost us very dear. Our loss amounted to about 96 officers killed and wounded, 105 serjeants and corporals, drummers and private men to the amount of near 900 killed and wounded. We are almost lost for want of fresh provisions, and indeed it is not to be had for any money: it is like Quebec the first winter we took it: we are entirely blocked up; batteries are against us on every side of the town, so that we are like birds in a cage.

*Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman in Stafford County, Virginia, to his Friend in London, dated Aug. 20, 1775.*<sup>1</sup>

Some letters which our Governor had wrote to Lord Dartmouth have been lately made public, and the manner in which he hath represented the Colony, and the conduct of the inhabitants, hath given the greatest offence. While they thought that he acted the part of a mediator, it appears from these letters, they say, that he hath been only the tool of administration, and hath encouraged their enemies to proceed in their plan of enslaving them. The passions of the people are wound up to the highest pitch; and his lordship not thinking himself safe among them hath gone some time ago on board one of the King's ships, and never comes ashore but with a guard of soldiers and marines, and then no further than the ships guns can secure his retreat. The inhabitants disclaim his authority and a convention of the representatives of this Colony now sits at Richmond-town, regulating the affairs of the public. The lower parts of the country are to be guarded by three or four thousand standing forces, and we are to have likewise several thousand minute men in every county who are only to have pay when on duty, and intended by the Convention as guard against the emergencies of a piratical war, which they imagine will be carried on against them if matters are not settled. As the country here is hilly and covered with woods, a war cannot be carried on but in an irregular way, and the inhabitants think they are qualified for conducting it with success, especially as they are better acquainted with the country and better marksmen than the British sol-

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, Oct. 24, 1775.



diers. Though the British officers may be better qualified for carrying on a regular war, the nature of the country will render their superior skill useless, and though they might beat them on the plains of Europe, the Americans think they could easily vanquish them in the woods of America. The towns upon the coast, for want of shipping and artillery, they will be obliged to give up; but if the British troops attempt to penetrate into the country they are resolved to repel them by force, and swear that they will shew them *buckskin play*. And if they can confine to the coast and cut them off from all supplies of fresh provisions, however numerous and well equipp'd the British army may be, they think it will soon grow weak and moulder away with sickness and diseases: for agues and fevers frequently rage upon the rivers and coast, and it is more than probable that these distempers will make sad havock among men who are strangers to the climate, subjected to hard duty, and forced to live upon salt provisions during the heat of the summer. However, after all, the British arms may prevail, but the conquest will not be so easy as many on your side of the water seem to think. — We are credibly informed by a gentleman who is just now returned from the Indian country, that many tribes are painted in the warlike colours, — that they have been dealt with by the Canadians, and are our foes, &c.

*A Gentleman of Whitby has sent us a copy of the following letter, dated from Philadelphia, August 23,<sup>1</sup> which was received at Whitby last Sunday:*

Major Skeen <sup>2</sup> has been sent to Hartford, in Con-

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, Oct. 17-19, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> Major Phillip Skeen, Governor of Crown Point and Ticonderoga,

necticut. When he marched off, he behaved with the countenance and spirit of a true British Soldier. We have had no battle since the Bunker's-Hill affair, but many skirmishes have been between the two armies, in which the Rifle-men have killed a great many of the King's troops. Gen. Gage has blown up Castle-William,<sup>1</sup> at Boston, and it is believed is going to force the Provincial lines. Three men of war and some transports took off some Islands, near New-York government, about 5000 sheep, cattle, hogs, &c.

Last week was seized near Gloucester, on board a ship from Cork, one Major French, and two other officers,<sup>2</sup> with 45 packages, containing 7500 suits of clothing for the army at Boston. The Major and Officers set out yesterday for the camp at Cambridge as prisoners of war. Next week we will have 13 row gallies here, armed and manned. They row twelve and fifteen oars on a side, and carry each a 24 or 32 pounder, some placed in the stern, and some in the bow, with swivels, cohorns, &c. round almost every part.

As to the Congress, they have adjourned till the 5th of next month, when they are to meet here again. No book has yet been published of their resolves. Yesterday the men of war lying at Newcastle took a schooner from Hispaniola, with some powder and arms, and the Port Penn stage boat. They have confined their Captains, and are sailed out of the river for Boston, as it is supposed. Lord Dunmore, Governor of Virginia, is on board a man of war; as is also

who had been taken into custody on his recent arrival at Philadelphia from England.

<sup>1</sup> There was no foundation for this report.

<sup>2</sup> Major Christopher French, Ensign John Rotton, and Mr. Terrence McDermott, of the ship Hope.

Governor Martin, of North Carolina. A force is expected soon from England at New York.

*Extract of a letter from Cambridge, August 27, 1775.*<sup>1</sup>

It has been for some time past an object of our Generals to take possession of a height called Plowed Hill, which lies between Bunker's and Prospect Hills; it commands the low ground between Bunker's and Prospect Hills; and would have made an excellent advanced post for the enemy. — To prevent their seating themselves on it, and in order to invite them out, General Lee ordered last Friday a large parcel of gabions and fascines to be carried down a hollow way from Winter Hill to the foot of Plowed Hill, and took possession of it with 1800 men at eight o'clock Saturday evening. An advanced party of 300 riflemen, lay all night close to the enemy's works; a covering party of 1200 men was posted in the rear of the hill, and about 300 were employed in the trenches, which were made tolerably secure before daylight. — About sun-rise the enemy discovered us at work, and at nine began a cannonade from their works and two floating batteries in Mystick River. — They killed one private and one Adjutant<sup>2</sup> of the Rhode Island forces, who were sitting within a few feet of our parapet, and took off the left foot of volunteer Simpson, of Captain Miller's rifle company, of Lancaster County, who advanced with some others to annoy their out posts. They continued their fire to eight o'clock in the evening, but did not venture out to dislodge us. — This morning, six o'clock, all is quiet.

<sup>1</sup> *London Evening Post*, Oct. 26–28, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> Adjutant Augustus Mumford, of Rhode Island.

*Extract of a letter from Boston, Aug. 27, 1775.<sup>1</sup>*

Our distresses accumulate every day; our barracks are all hospitals, and so offensive is the stench of the wounds, that the very air is infected with the smell. What, in God's name, are ye all about in England? Have you forgot us? — or are you fascinated? — for we have not had a vessel for three months with any sort of supplies; and therefore our miseries are become manifold. The army is quite dissatisfied; the undue mode of preferment hath greatly disgusted many. Thirty-two officers have made their offers of resignation, and General Gage has accepted them; referring at the same time for redress of grievances to the King. I hope some measure of accommodation will be speedily fixed upon, for this is a nail that will never drive, and therefore it is best to draw it by the head. I wish all the violent people for carrying on vigorous measures here were sent over; I answer for it their vigour would be soon cooled and reduced, — God send us peace and a good fire-side in Old England.

*Extract of a private letter from New York to a Merchant in this city, dated Aug. 30.<sup>2</sup>*

By the ship which brings you this you will undoubtedly receive the New York Papers containing an account of the conduct of Captain Vandeput of the Asia, in firing on the town to stop the removal of the cannon which were carrying away by order of the Congress. These papers speak very disrespectfully of the Captain's behavior; but I assure you they have treated him with great injustice, by charging him

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and Daily Advertiser*, Oct. 12, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> *London Chronicle*, Oct. 19–21, 1775.



with cruelty and inhumanity. The case was briefly and truly this: Captain Vandeput being informed that the people were removing his Majesty's cannon, &c. he fired only a few shot into the town by way of intimidation, and to stop their progress, notwithstanding which they actually moved off near twenty pieces, and but three of the provincials were slightly wounded; whereas, had [he] been cruel or inhuman, he could soon have destroyed the whole town. A thief might with as much truth and reason complain of the cruelty of a man who should knock him down for robbing him! But the Patriots here constantly misrepresent every thing; and our news-papers contain very little to be depended on.

*Extract of a letter from Baltimore, in Maryland, Sept. 5.*<sup>1</sup>

This town is already, and I am afraid the whole Province will soon be in a state of anarchy and confusion, in consequence of the Committee here having granted an indulgence to Mr. Hudson<sup>2</sup> to take in a cargo after the 10th of September, on account of his ship having met with an accident. The cargo, which is a valuable one, belongs to Mr. Kelly. Mr. Hudson would never have thought of an application to the Committee, had he not advised it, and drawn up a memorial which met with too much success. One thousand two hundred men are ready to come from the Forest next week to prevent the ship from loading, so that God only knows how this matter will end, especially if the Town Companies attempt to support the Act of the Committee. In consequence of the

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Oct. 16-18, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> Jonathan Hudson.

above indulgence, two or three others have applied for the same favour, and have obtained it; so that we are afraid the credit of this Province will be much injured by this strange violation of the Association. Mr. Kelly, who commenced this business, is what we call a moderate man. Let him be what he will, he has either intentionally or innocently done this place more injury than he can ever repair; for a defection in one place is too soon made use of as a precedent in another; if so, adieu to the liberties of America. I still hope this matter will not operate against us, but that Great Britain is now sick of the contest. I forgot to mention, that out of compassion for Mr. Hudson, we must pay for the cargo if the ship is not laden, the indulgence was granted.

*Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman at Boston, dated Sept. 6.*<sup>1</sup>

On the 30th ult. a number of transports with six hundred soldiers on board, sailed from hence, under convoy of two men of war. It was not then publicly known what was their destination, but it is now certain they went against Rhode Island, and we have received accounts that they have made themselves masters of it, and are fortifying Newport. If this is true the inhabitants of Newport will soon be in the same situation as ourselves, which God knows is not to be envied.

*Extract of Letter from a Gentleman at Newport, Rhode Island, to his Friend in London, dated Sept. 7.*<sup>2</sup>

You will easily judge what our situation is, when I inform you that, like our unhappy brethren in Bos-

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, Oct. 7-10, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

ton, we are entirely at the mercy and disposal of an army of ministerial mercenaries. Don't you pity us? I know you do; but be not dismayed, as I assure you they cannot keep their ground when we have collected our forces. When they landed their army, which consists of not less than 1000 men, we were only able to muster about 400, who did every thing that was possible against such superiority of numbers, disputing the ground with the mercenaries inch by inch; but numbers prevailed; and after they had forced our brave fellows to retire, they took possession of this town, which they have since been busily fortifying; but I hope we shall soon put a stop to their proceedings.

It was on the 3d instant that we may say we lost our liberty. Whilst our hostile foe remains amongst us, we shall be robbed of every mouthful of provisions; nor will they be satisfied with what they destroy themselves, but they must likewise supply their brethren at Boston. — Good God help us!

*Extract of a letter from New York, Sept. 7.<sup>1</sup>*

On Tuesday, the 22 ult. his Majesty's ships the *Rose*, *Swan*, and *Glasgow*, attempted to go to Providence, and got within eight miles of the town, when two of them ran ashore, and the other came to an anchor. Soon after arrived a brig and a sloop, in-ward bound, from the West Indies; these were immediately chased by the men of war's barges and three cutters, 'till they run ashore at Warwick, where they were boarded by the man of war's men, in sight of a great number of people, who had assembled on the shore. There were

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Oct. 12, 1775.

in the harbour two armed schooners, fitted out by the town of Providence for the protection of their trade, and were going to convoy a small fleet down the river. A smart engagement then began, and lasted three hours and a half, during which, an incessant fire was kept up between the two schooners and the brig and sloop, which the people on board often attempted to get off, but as often were driven from the windlasses. But at last they cut the brig's cable and carried her off, with the Captain on board, who refused to quit her; the sloop we retook, and brought her into the harbour, though fired upon by the men of war as we passed them. We had not a man killed or wounded, which is surprising. Upwards of 30 cannon balls were picked up on the shore. It is supposed many of the enemy were killed.

Friday afternoon, a sloop with dispatches from General Gage, lying near the man of war, sent her boat ashore with four men and one woman, who being observed by some of our people, they were all taken prisoners, and carried to the guard-house; the woman was discharged, but the men are detained for further examination. The boat was stove to pieces on the beach near Greenwich, and then burnt.

*A Gentleman has sent us the following Extract of a Letter from an Officer in the Army at Rhode Island, to his Friend in London, dated Sept. 8, 1775.*<sup>1</sup>

It will, doubtless, be an agreeable surprise to you to hear that we are now masters of Rhode Island. I will in a few words give you an account of this fortunate transaction. Measures being concerted, Gen. Bur-

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Oct. 9-11, 1775.



goyne, with 600 men under his command, embarked as privately as possible on board some transports, and sailed under convoy of two men of war; the wind favouring us, we soon made Rhode Island. We immediately landed our little army at some distance from Newport, and began to march towards it as expeditiously as possible, but before we reached it, were opposed by about an equal number of Provincials, whom we soon dispersed with scarce any loss to our side, but considerable on their part: We put them in great confusion, and they retired precipitately, after which we met with little opposition in taking possession of the Town. We now have fresh provisions in profusion, and can supply our Comrades in Boston with any quantity. The Inhabitants, although they are intirely at our mercy, are rather backward in furnishing us, but threats and good payment always have the desired effect. To the honour of our Soldiers be it told, not the least complaint of any depredations hath been made. We are busy fortifying ourselves and shall soon be tenable against any Force the Rebels can bring against us.

*Extract of a letter from a gentleman of Virginia to his friend in this city, dated Sept. 8.<sup>1</sup>*

The people of this colony are proceeding in the most violent and unjustifiable manner — every person who refuses to join their independent companies and support *the cause*, as they term it, is sure to be personally insulted and abused, his house levelled with the ground and his furniture destroyed, by a set of fellows habited as Indians. — A few Sundays since I

<sup>1</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, Nov. 11, 1775.

was a spectator of a daring outrage and abuse to a very worthy clergyman here. — He had silently passed over the riots, &c. committed by those lawless people in his parish, but took that opportunity to make some remarks, in his discourse, on the disorders that prevailed, and in the mildest terms endeavoured to convince them of their error and to persuade them to peace and obedience. — Before he concluded his sermon, some of those gentry raised a confusion in the church, and on the clergyman's coming out, they seized him and beat him in a most cruel manner, and obliged him on his knees to ask pardon of America in their presence, for the liberty he had taken with its just proceedings in his sermon. — After this and every other mortifying concession, they could extort from him, they did suffer him to go home, where he lies in a dangerous way. — So you see, we are without law or gospel.

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, Sept. 9.*<sup>1</sup>

A number of galliots and floating batteries, mounting from 18 to 32 pounders, carrying two latteen sails, and from 16 to 32 oars each, with a number of swivels, small arms, &c. are launched, and fit for immediate service; a boom is making to be laid across the harbour; our magazines are filled with military stores — great quantities are daily arriving, and every preparation is making here for carrying on a vigorous campaign.

<sup>1</sup> *London Evening Post*, Nov. 9–11, 1775.

*Extract of a letter from Newbern, North Carolina, dated Sept. 22, brought by the Packet that arrived on Monday.*<sup>1</sup>

This week will ever be remembered as the most remarkable epocha in the annals of this country, for the discovery of the grand repository and depositum of Governor Martin's <sup>2</sup> magazine, which, with cool deliberation, he intended to deal out in missive weapons of death to the good people of this province. In the palace garden, and under a fine bed of cabbages, was found and dug up a barrel, containing about three bushels of gunpowder; in the palace cellar was also dug up two quarter casks of the same commodity, the casks quite new, and marked R. B.; in the palace garden was also dug up about 1000 weight of musket balls, lately cast, about 500 weight of iron swivel balls, a large quantity of small shot, lead, iron, worms for the cannon, with swabs, rammers, artillery boxes, matches, and the whole apparatus for the Governor's park of artillery, which he would have mounted at the palace, had not the appearance of the people of Newbern, on his attempting to move the palace guns, driven him from the trenches before he had made them quite tenable. It is said his Excellency, the night before he took his precipitate flight from the palace, buried these engines of death, as they might remain in places of safety till he or his creatures might have an opportunity to use them. The palace cannon, it is said, were spiked up after his Excellency left the palace by a person who will, no doubt, be obliged to answer for his conduct, as it is improbable the Governor could procure these

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, Dec. 5-7, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> Josiah Martin, governor of North Carolina.

deadly weapons without assistance. The committee of this town and country are using their utmost diligence to discover the authors of so black a treachery.

*Extract of a letter from Pennsylvania, dated Sept. 28.<sup>1</sup>*

Philadelphia is in a state of anarchy and confusion, and it is believed a greater confusion is not remote, from the great number of labouring people precluded from earning their bread by the stoppage of trade, who must necessarily fall on people of condition for their maintenance. Three millions of dollars used [issued] by the Congress are in ready circulation, except among the Quakers, who seem disposed to refuse them, though eighty-seven of the younger part of that people are in arms, out of 800 families resident in that city. Many of that people in and near Providence have suffered distrainment of goods, for not sending Men as Soldiers, and they have had resolution enough to disown, from their Body, some who have, and notwithstanding popular abuse, notably pleaded their Cause before the Committee of Usurpation, for not complying with the Congress's order of a Fast. Suffering, by rapid strides, seems coming on us all.

*Copy of a letter from a gentleman at Philadelphia, dated October 5, to his correspondent in London.<sup>2</sup>*

Surely the people at large of Great Britain, are involved in worse than Egyptian darkness, while their rulers are madly rushing, like Pharaoh and his host, through a sea of blood, on their utter destruction.

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Nov. 20-22, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> *London Evening Post*, Nov. 23-25, 1775.



Our people commiserate the situation of the British soldiery; but if foreign mercenaries should come over, the most cowardly of the Americans will be inspired with courage, and they will not meet with like pity; we are well prepared to meet *any* force that can be sent against us. The Americans in general are as well disciplined as Regulars, and have plenty of ammunition; above all, Providence smiles on our righteous cause, and our Country. The earth this year has been laden with riches; never were such great crops taken from it of every kind, so that there can be no danger of starving; and our troops have had such success in every enterprize, that the hand of Heaven seems visibly on our side: even the bloody affair at Bunker's Hill was such a galling stroke to the Regulars, that a few more victories of a similar kind would utterly destroy them. The battle at the islands near Boston was a very great action,<sup>1</sup> as General Gage lost above 300 men, without the loss on our side of any more than one single American. In short, when I survey every step heretofore taken, I cannot but conclude, in the words of an old fashioned book, seldom consulted by kings or their ministers: "The kings of the earth stand up, and their rulers take council together; but He, by whom kings reign, shall laugh them to scorn, even the Holy one shall have them in derision." Sooner or later he will vindicate his own divine prerogative by the overthrow of tyrants and of tyranny.

<sup>1</sup> The skirmishes on Hog and Noddle Islands were magnified into a battle and the British losses were greatly exaggerated.

*Extract of a Letter from a Sergeant of Foot in the King's Troops, to his Relation in the Isle of Ely, dated Boston, Oct. 6.*<sup>1</sup>

We are at present in a very bad situation, but are in expectation that affairs will be made up, as some of our commanders are gone to Philadelphia, to the Congress there, to agree with them if possible; if not, we expect orders to engage them again, and burn and destroy all before us. We are encamped right opposite one another, and within gun-shot.

The centries on each side are killing one another every day, and frequent desertions on both sides, by which we learn that the enemy is 70,000 strong, well armed and disciplined, and fit for service. We have not 9000 in all, horse and foot. The climate does not agree with our men, they die fast, and the flux rages.

We are surrounded by the rebels, and from the intelligence given us by the deserters that have come over to us, we find, that when they departed, they had orders to storm us the first opportunity, so that we expect it every night; and if they do we shall be all put to the sword, having no where to retreat to but the shipping, if we should be so unfortunate to be defeated; however, I trust, notwithstanding their numbers, which are as nine to one, we shall be able to conquer them.

*Genuine extract of a letter from New York, dated October 8.*<sup>2</sup>

The unhappy disputes between this country and Great Britain have thrown us into great confusion: We have no troops here, and the rebels get so much

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, Dec. 14-16, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Nov. 22, 1775.

the upper hand that no man dares even to speak his sentiments without the danger of imprisonment, and many are suspected of thinking, God knows what will be the end of it; you should send a sufficient force here at once without hesitation, and at the same time begin at home to hang Lord C——m [Chatham] and Lord C——n [Camden], with Wilkes, and some others, these disputes having in a great measure originated with their wicked and unprincipled conduct in regard to both countries.

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia.*<sup>1</sup>

The Delegates of our omnipotent Congress have totally disagreed upon the subject of every plan of future operation. The exorbitant estimates of the General Officers of our continental army, now convince us of the impossibility of supporting our troops during four months: the only supplies we receive are in the English newspapers. Their grants to us are truly liberal, perfectly catholic — similar to the grants of the Pope to the Sovereigns of Spain. In fact an universal jealousy prevails among us; every Delegate suspects each other. The plots discovered to the Congress of the intended treachery of our military leaders to deliver us up prisoners to the King's army, has spread a general consternation.

The plausible plan proposed by our General to the Congress, that he should have near him a deputation or committee of some of our principle Delegates, to consult in cases of greatest importance, was to be agreed to, the morning the horrid conspiracy was discovered.

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, Dec. 1, 1775.

In the hour of danger, the Lord took us under his protection, and our delivery was miraculous. The grey-headed Putnam was our guardian-angel, and his revelation proved our salvation. — His messenger arrived in the approaching moment of our destruction.

The traitors that were present in our council, proposed we should have deputies from the Congress, similar to the policy of our Dutch brethren, the United Provinces of Holland, to accompany our Generals in the field, to assist at all councils of war, to have the power of a negative upon all military operations. — The Judas of our council was assured, at least the principal of our patriotic Delegates, if not the whole Congress, would assemble within a few miles of our army — and it was a certainty the great men of our Congress would constantly be in the power of our military traitors. — It is said the brave Putnam, having discovered he was devoted for the first victim of this massacre of the innocents, has retreated to the mountains — That a considerable sum was to be paid when we were delivered up for slaughter — That our traitors were to be rewarded with preferment in the East and the West, and likewise in the German dominions of the crown.<sup>1</sup>

I shall take my departure by the first trusty conveyance for Holland or the Dutch isles. The Lord have mercy on his faithful servants in America.

<sup>1</sup> The foundation for this hysterical outburst was the fact that Congress appointed from its members a committee consisting of Messrs. Franklin, Lynch, and Harrison to confer with General Washington on matters concerning the army. Washington received them at Cambridge with "highest satisfaction."



*Extract of a letter from a Gentleman at Norfolk, in Virginia, to his Friend in Aberdeen, dated Oct. 20, 1775.<sup>1</sup>*

All our ports are shut up by the men of war, so that no vessel is allowed to go from one river to another. This day two vessels arrived here with a number of Soldiers. Not a day passes but they are searching for arms, ammunition, &c. and have taken prisoners, and secured on board the ships, several Gentlemen whom they suspect to have been most active in the American side of the question. Most of the inhabitants have abandoned this town; most of the houses and shops are empty, and if there is not a speedy settlement, the whole of this Province must be ruined.

*Extract of a letter from Newport, Rhode Island, Oct. 21.<sup>2</sup>*

Last Monday the men of war, after firing on Bristol and Papaquash, went into the Ferry way between Portsmouth and Bristol, and fired near 200 shot at the houses and people on each side; three shot struck the house of Capt. Earl near the Ferry, which is all the damage done there that we hear of; sixty shot, we hear, were fired at the windmill, without hitting it. From thence some of the ships tenders, and transports, went and surrounded Gould-island and took a few sheep; others went to Hope-island and got two or three young cattle; thence they proceeded to Dutch-Island, in Narraganset-bay, where were upwards of 100 rams, part of which some people from Narraganset took off, while the vessels lay there: The remainder, about 60, the Enemy took away. On the whole, this fleet, by cruising and firing about our Bays and

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Dec. 25-27, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

Harbours for near a fortnight, have got about 40 head of cattle great and small, and 180 sheep, including the cattle bought of the Brentons,<sup>1</sup> and 60 rams.

The same day the Glasgow fired a number of cannon upon the town of Jamestown, without doing any damage except beating one stone out of a house.

The men of war, tenders, &c. came down the Bay, and anchored in this Harbour last Thursday.

Within fourteen days past the men of war have taken out and cut away the masts, bowsprits, &c. of a number of small sloops and ferry boats.

*Extract of a letter from Williamsburgh, Oct. 24.<sup>2</sup>*

Three distinct companies for the regular service have arrived here lately, viz. Capt. Rich. Parker's, from Lancaster; Capt. William Talliaferro's, from Carolina; Captain William Davies's, from Princess Anne. It is said the battalion of minute-men in Culpepper district is completed, and has been encamped several days.

On Thursday last the General Assembly met at the Capitol, and adjourned to the first Thursday in March next.

The Captain of a sloop here (a second mad Montague) it is said, lately seized upon, and forced on board his ship, an inhabitant of Norfolk or Portsmouth, for some trivial offence; who, after calling a Court-martial, and giving him a fair trial (as they were pleased to term it) passed sentence upon him to receive thirty-nine lashes, which would have been

<sup>1</sup> Jahleel and Benjamin Brenton of Newport were suspected of loyalist sympathies.

<sup>2</sup> *London Chronicle*, Dec. 23-26, 1775.

executed, had not his Excellency the Governor, on being acquainted with this base and unmanly conduct, interposed, who severely reprimanded the tyrant Montague, sent the man ashore, and desired he would take out a peace warrant against him.

Capt. Macartney, of the Mercury man of war, has had his trial at Boston, and was honourably acquitted; but he absolutely refuses to serve his Majesty any longer unless appointed to the command of a ship of greater force.

*Letter of a gentleman of distinction at New-York,  
October 26, 1775.<sup>1</sup>*

Our army is still beseiging Boston, out of which Howe and his mercenaries dare not peep. I have therefore no military news of importance to write you; very interesting political intelligence will however compensate. Our General has discovered a most treacherous correspondence carried on between Dr. C——,<sup>2</sup> Surgeon General of our grand army, and Major C——,<sup>3</sup> of the mercenaries. This betrayer of his country was looked on by us all, as one of the firmest friends of America. We have now found out that he disclosed every material secret and resolution of our Council of War and Congresses. There is no doubt of his being hanged as a due reward for his perfidy. The history of this man is uncommon striking; he was one of that arch-traitor Governor ——'s [Hutchinsons'] bitterest enemies. The Governor, who had long smarted under the lash of his pen,

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, Jan. 1, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Benjamin Church.

<sup>3</sup> The envelope was directed to Major Cane or Kane, but the letter within was written to Mr. Fleming, a brother-in-law of Dr. Church.

formed a plan to destroy him under the mask of friendship. Through the Doctor's friends he made him large promises if he would join the government party. C—— was venal, and took the bait. Large sums of money were from time to time given him for his treacherous discoveries. ——, Satan-like, would not allow him to side openly with the ministerial party, as he could make him more useful as a traitor, than a deserter. In this manner did one villain lure another to his destruction. C——'s punishment will render him an object of pity; ——'s diabolical project of ruining an enemy under the mask of friendship, his security from punishment, and his additional preferments, will brand him with eternal infamy. It is not in human nature to conceive a more refined and fiend-like villainy than this plot of ——'s; he knew that in the course of C——'s traiterous correspondencies, detection must ensue; surrounded as he was by thousands, watchful in the cause of their country; and knowing the man as you and I do, you will readily believe that he was cursing our stupidity in not detecting him sooner. You will find by this fanatic business that —— has outdone his tutor Machiavel. He makes friendship with his greatest enemy, loads him with favours, and then lures him in a situation from whence, in the nature of things, escape was an impossibility. If we were as bad as our enemies say we are, yet thank God, the worst of us are angels to such a wretch as ——.

*Extract of a letter from Norfolk, in Virginia, October 28, 1775.*<sup>1</sup>

Lord Dunmore sails up and down the river, and

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Dec. 28, 1775.



where he finds a defenceless place, he lands, plunders the plantations, and carries off the negroes. The other day he found some guns that lay upon the mud, and had formerly belonged to a privateer; these with much pomp he spiked up and rendered useless, though in truth they were honey-comb'd already. The respect which we bear to the character he holds, has prevented us from opposing him, but a continuance of his depredations, will oblige us to act upon the defensive towards him. We expect soon an armament against us, and therefore are preparing to receive it.

*Extract of a Letter from Philadelphia, Oct. 28.*<sup>1</sup>

On Monday morning the 16th instant, the transport ship, Capt. Hasting, of London, bound from Boston for New York, with seventeen seamen, a Capt. Duncan Campble, a Lieut. Sims, a recruiting serjeant, and fifteen or twenty ragamuffin fellows, that had ran from New York and listed, who acted as marines on board, ran ashore on Brigantine Beach, near Egg Harbour, where she is lost. The seamen and marines were secured soon after their coming on shore, and conducted to this city, where the former are set at liberty, but the marines are properly secured. Capt. Camble, Lieut. Sims, and one Cameron, (who it appears were to land at New York to list what men they could, by large promises of confiscated land, which he never could fulfill, get them on board the Asia, and then transport them to Boston) left the ship in a small boat, put into a place called Cranbury Inlet, but being pursued, were seized on board a sloop in which they had taken their passage for New York. —

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, Dec. 12-14, 1775.

It is said, before they quitted the ship they threw overboard several pieces of cannon belonging to the vessel, 60 muskets, and two and half barrels of powder. The vessel left Boston the 5th of October, in company with a 20 gun ship and one transport with some troops bound for Halifax. No other ships of war or troops had sailed. The 48th and 50th regiments being greatly reduced, the privates are incorporated into other regiments, and their officers going home. The object of Col. Arnold's expedition was not known at Boston, but supposed to be destined against Halifax. Beef at Boston was nine-pence sterling per pound, mutton a quarter of a dollar, and bills of exchange sold at 20 per cent. discount.

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, Oct. 30.<sup>1</sup>*

Orders are given to fortify our river, that no ship of war can come up without much hot work, and the militia still continue to exercise with as much assiduity as ever. All the commission officers for the new standing army are nearly appointed, and 'tis thought the companies will be filled up directly, as the people for months past have been crying out for the measure. A very considerable quantity of gun-powder is lately arrived in New England, which, when it reaches the camp, is expected to bring on a very warm day, however late we are now in Autumn.

The people in Maryland and Virginia have begun to dig up their tobacco houses, and lixiviate the earth for nitre; and what would seem incredible, had a person of less credibility than Doctor Boyd <sup>2</sup> of Balti-

<sup>1</sup> *London Evening Post*, Dec. 23-26, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> Probably Dr. John Boyd, member of the Baltimore County Committee of Safety.

more related it, two ounces of saltpetre have been obtained from two quarts of loom. This success has excited a perfect enthusiasm throughout the country, and manufacture of nitre will be every where dominant. I know of three lead mines myself, whose ore yields 75 per cent, and we have assurance of as much copper from the Jerseys, as will furnish us with as many field pieces as we can wish to employ.

*Extract of a letter from Charles-Town, South Carolina,  
Nov. 24.<sup>1</sup>*

On Tuesday last three schooner hulks were sunk in Marsh Channel, so that no vessels of any considerable burthen can come within musket shot of Fort Johnson, which has been strengthened with some additional works. The person who performed this business was one Capt. Tufts, in the Colony's schooner, Defence, mounted with two nine-pounders, six six-pounders, and four four-pounders, and seventy seamen and marines; being within gun-shot of the Tamer man of war, she fired six shot at the schooner, but without effect; Tufts only fired two shots; night coming on, the man of war warped down nearer the schooner, and about four o'clock on Sunday morning the Tamer and Chiroke fired each a broad-side, and continued their firing till near seven, notwithstanding which Capt. Tufts got up to the town with only the loss of one man and a little damage to her rigging.

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, Feb. 8, 1776.

*Extract of a letter from George Town, Maryland,  
Nov. 26, 1775.*<sup>1</sup>

Major Conolly,<sup>2</sup> with three companions, are just taken five miles above Hagar's Town, on their way to Fort Pitt. Conolly had been this Summer at Boston, where he presented a plan of operation for next Spring to General Gage, which met with the General's approbation, and he was now in his way to put it in execution. He is made Lieutenant Colonel Commandant, was to proceed to Fort Detroit, where Captain Lord,<sup>3</sup> who is now at the Illinois with two companies of the Royal Irish, was to meet him with the field pieces and stores that are there. Conolly was to raise a regiment, and as many Indians and Partisans as he could; to enable him to do this, he had power to promise every person that entered into the service, 300 acres of land when the troubles were over, and what other pecuniary rewards he might think proper; was to appoint and commission all the Officers under him, which commissions were to be confirmed by Lord Dunmore — With this force he was to penetrate through the country, in order to cut off the communication between the Southern and Northern Colonies, destroy Fort Pitt and Fort Fincastle, if the Americans should make any resistance, and meet Lord Dunmore by the 20th of April next at Alexandria, where he (Dunmore) was to land an army under the cannon of the ships of war. Conolly's companions were one Cameron,<sup>4</sup> who is now a Lieutenant, with a promise of promotion and one Dr. Smith,<sup>5</sup> who says he was to be

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Jan. 22-24, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> Major John Conolly.

<sup>3</sup> Captain Hugh Lord.

<sup>4</sup> Allan Cameron.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. John Ferdinand D. Smith.



Surgeon, of Conolly's regiment; they were examined before the Committee: On searching their portman-teaus a copy of Conolly's plan was found.

*Extract of a letter from Savannah in Georgia, dated  
Nov. 29.<sup>1</sup>*

There was a very hot engagement the 18th inst. between the rebels and a party of the royalists,<sup>2</sup> which lasted three days, at which time the rebels were obliged to surrender the fort and prisoners; the loss on either side I have not distinctly heard, but imagine it is considerable, namely, on the part of the regulars. This engagement was the first we have had in Georgia since these disturbances began; indeed it is the only one of consequence we have heard of, on this side of Boston. I am much afraid, however, it is only a prelude to more bloodshed in this corner, for the rebels are making preparations for another attack, and if no soldiers arrive in Carolina, to keep the Charles Town forces in play at home, I dread the consequences; for the other party are not sufficiently supplied with ammunition, nor can they possibly collect together those who would readily join them, they being dispersed up and down the country.

*Extract of a letter from a Master of a transport at Boston, to  
his Owner at Shields, Nov. 30.<sup>3</sup>*

On my arrival here, the Admiral pressed all my hands; they served all the transports in the same man-

<sup>1</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, Feb. 24, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> Probably a reference to the engagement between the militia and the loyalists in Ninty Six District, when the militia were called upon to disarm; they refused and were besieged for two days. McGrady, *South Carolina during the Revolution*, p. 89.

<sup>3</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Jan. 3-5, 1776.

ner. As to the situation of Boston, it is almost surrounded by the Americans, and their works appear to be very strong for seven miles round. The troops in Boston are well supplied with salt provisions, flour, pease, &c. but the inhabitants fare badly. The Soldiers seem to be in good spirits, but the Heads of the Army and Navy are but upon indifferent terms; when that is the case, especially at a critical juncture, God only knows what will be the end of it.

*Extract of a letter from one of the fleet at Boston, dated  
Nov. 30, 1775.<sup>1</sup>*

Matters are carried on here with a very high hand on both sides; but before the ensuing spring is at an end, you will hear of a material alteration in the government of America. The Congress has published a declaration of war against the British Parliament, and have issued commissions to privateers. They took a transport with arms within a mile of one of our ships at anchor; indeed they are bold enough to dare and do any thing. It is a pity the parliament were in such a hurry to stigmatize them with cowardice before they were tried. However, whatever other vices they may have, *cowardice* is not one of them. There is a report, that the Provincials have made application and propositions for a cessation of arms for five months, but this is considered rather as a stroke of policy, than a desire of accommodating matters. We ought to be guarded against their policy, for they have already often outwitted us. We are ordered to the southward, of which I am glad, for the cold is very severe and intense at this moment. The Nautilus

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Jan. 6, 1776.

has been severely cannonaded by the Provincial batteries at Cape Anne; like military Harlequins they attack us every where. God end this unnatural warfare.

*Part of a letter from Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup>*

If you do not know General Washington's person, perhaps you will be pleased to hear, that he has so much martial dignity in his deportment, that you would distinguish him to be a General and a Soldier, from among ten thousand people: there is not a King in Europe but would look like a valet de chambre by his side.

General Lee too, with all his oddities, is very popular; he has infused a spirit of order and subordination in the army, which we greatly wanted before he accepted a command in it. Our climate is very favourable to the manufacturing of saltpetre; we expect to make enough in a year or two's time to supply gunpowder for our American fleet, as well as an army. The design of Heaven, I believe, is finally gone forth; Britain and America will hereafter be distinct empires; America is the *sanctum saliens*; the only received principle of the whole world. Adieu! my dear friend; continue to cherish the Heaven-born stranger, Liberty, in your bosom.

*A letter from Boston, received at Bristol by a light Victualler, just returned from thence,<sup>2</sup> says,*

We were very fortunate in making the land, which was just at break of day; being in the middle of the Bay, we fell in with the Mercury man of war (with a

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, Jan. 16, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Jan. 1-3, 1776.

fleet of ships from New Portsmouth, which place they had burnt) who convoyed us safe into Boston. The Bay at present is very unsafe for vessels unarmed, as it swarms with privateers, and a great number of whale boats, each carrying from ten to twenty men; these boats take the opportunity of putting out in moderate weather to intercept the vessels bound to Boston, and as we have no King's ships in any of the Ports but Boston, they do just as they please, and can always make a Port on one side or other of the Bay; they were so daring few days ago as to board a brig off the Light-house, from Liverpool, which was at anchor; as they came on board on one side, the crew left it on the other; in the mean time an armed transport slipped her cables and run down to her assistance; when the Provincials saw the transport coming down, they left the brig, but endeavoured to set her on fire, by leaving some lighted coals on the cabin floor.

*A letter received by the last ship from America gives the following intelligence: <sup>1</sup>*

The public have already been informed, that on the 22d of October last Lord Dunmore put to the rout about 200 of the Virginia Provincials at Kemp's Landing, near Norfolk, taking several prisoners, amongst others Mr. Robinson,<sup>2</sup> a Provincial Delegate from Princess Anne County. Their Commander, Colonel Hutchings, the Delegate for Norfolk, made his escape; and having raised another little Army, con-

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Feb. 2-5, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> William Robinson. According to Eckenrode (*The Revolution in Virginia*, p. 68), fifteen or twenty prisoners were taken, including Joseph Hutchins and Anthony Lawson.



sisting of nearly the same number of men, fixed his head quarters at a place called the North Landing, about 18 miles from Norfolk, and on the 24th of November sent an invitation to Dunmore to meet him with an equal number of men in an old field near the Landing. No notice being taken of this challenge, it was repeated next day; accordingly in the evening 40 Marines and a company of Soldiers were sent against them, and arrived next morning at the Landing, but found no Provincials there. After resting and refreshing, the party began their march back, and had no sooner entered the woods than they received a heavy fire from the bushes, which killed two or three of their number, and wounded as many. The Officer who commanded immediately formed, and advanced to the spot, where he found a great number of firelocks laying on the ground and saw the Provincials running into a swamp close by; orders were instantly given to fire into the swamp, and though it was covered with underwood, the fire was not without effect; a Mr. Akis,<sup>1</sup> formerly a Member of Assembly, and a few others were killed, two or three drowned in an attempt to swim over a creek in the swamp, and Hutchings himself made prisoner.

*Extract of a letter from Boston, Dec. 1, by the Queen of Naples, arrived at Dover.*<sup>2</sup>

The works of this place have been repaired and fortified as far as art can go. There is no part of them but what is mined, even the castle itself; should therefore the Provincials, when the frost sets in, think proper

<sup>1</sup> John Ackiss.

<sup>2</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Jan. 2, 1776.

to make a desperate attack, they will meet with a reception which their rashness merits. The arrival of the Transports with the provisions, has changed the face of things here, and the daily succours we receive (for money will purchase any thing) has put us into high spirits. The reports of a play-house here, is true; the officers have acted several pieces, and very laudably given the receipts of the houses to soldiers who had families, and were in want of assistance.

*Extract of a letter from an Officer in the Camp on Bunker's Hill, dated Dec. 4.<sup>1</sup>*

You would be amazed how I am able to write this instant, for it hails, rains, snows, and blows very bleakly on my canvas house. The Regulars and the Provincials squint at one another like wild cats across a gutter, and it is very probable we shall keep our distance till the cessation of the winter enables us to open the campaign.

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, Dec. 6.<sup>2</sup>*

We have just come to hand, by express from Virginia, that Ld. Dunmore had issued a Proclamation, declaring all Negroes and servants free that belonged to men in arms for the defence of their country;<sup>3</sup> that he had beat the Provincials in two skirmishes; the particulars are only known to the Congress, which we fear are not very favourable. Great numbers of people, white and black, had repaired to the King's

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, Jan. 29, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Jan. 20, 1776.

<sup>3</sup> On Nov. 7 Lord Dunmore issued a proclamation from on board the ship William granting freedom to all slaves and indentured servants who should join the King's standard.

standard, which he had hoisted. As there are in Norfolk many of his sc——ly countrymen, English Tories, and others, no better, and thro' the country, in the neighbouring counties of Aromack, Hampton, and others on the western shore, many gentlemen wavering, we should not wonder at their being awed to follow this Jacobite Scotch fortunist to their ruin. Little do they or he know what force we are preparing. All the Virginia and North Carolina troops are in full march against him; and for fear they may not be able to follow these vagabonds, traitors to their country, from river to river, as he may proceed with the assistance of his vessels, we are fitting out here a number of ships with the greatest expedition to attack him; they will sail, or at least fall down the river in a few days, viz. The Black Prince, a fine vessel, I believe you know her well, carries a flag, and mounts twenty to thirty twelve and sixteen pounders, besides swivels, and fights them mostly under deck. Two stout fast sailing brigs, a sixteen gun sloop, just arrived from Rhode Island, with one or two other ships, not yet in commission; the Admiral and Commanders are all determined on, but not publickly known. Other ships will join our fleet in Chesopeak Bay, from Baltimore town.

The Scotch and Irish people there are hand in hand with us, and very spirited. We do not expect much aid from Annapolis, as the most able people there (except the Carrols) are creatures, tools of government and Tories; many of which are already fled to your degenerate land for safety; particularly three of the Delanys, Dr. Stewart and his sons, your old friend T. C. Williams, and A. Stewart, who last year

made their peace with a burnt offering of their brig and tea.<sup>1</sup> No doubt but you will see them in Bristol; they may think themselves happy in being out of the way; for be assured, men of their sentiments have not much security for their lives and properties here. But to return; there is but little doubt of our united forces soon giving a good account of Lord Dunmore, which we pray most ardently for. We have nothing to fear but from the *Asia*, a sixty gun ship, lying at New York, that the Captain may have information of the destination of our fleet, and endeavour to interrupt them at our Capes. Hell itself could not have vomitted any thing more black than his design of emancipating our slaves; and unless he is cut off before he is reinforced, we know not how far the contagion may spread. The flame runs like wild fire through the slaves, who are more than two for one white in the Southern Colonies. The subject of their nocturnal revels, instead of music and dancing, is now turned upon their liberty. I know not whence these troubles may lead us. If our friends in England are not able to oblige the ministry to give way, we are lost; and already gone too far to retract with safety. Our great dependence has been from your side the water; but from what we are told by Dr. Ewing,<sup>2</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> The two most prominent members of the Carroll family were Charles Carroll of Carrollton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and Charles Carroll, barrister. Daniel Dulany, Lloyd Dulany, and Daniel Dulany, son of Walter, all took active part in the loyalist cause. Dr. Ferdinand Smyth Stuart was a physician and planter who much later went to England. Thomas Charles Williams was the merchant of Annapolis to whom the tea on board the *Peggy Stewart* was consigned. Anthony Stewart was the owner of the *Peggy Stewart*, who set her on fire.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. John Ewing had been in England soliciting contributions for the support of Newark Academy and had lately returned.



others lately arrived, we have no very sanguine hopes. We are embarked, God only knows, if on a leeshore, in a leaky ship, or not; if so, we must beat her off, and weather the storm as well as we can. We have able pilots on board, inferior to none, with many brave, resolute, stout men. But how are the scenes changed! our very wives and children do not appear so lovely in our eyes as usual; indeed they look more yellow, and the flame in our winter fires kindles up blue. The arts all turned into the making of salt-petre; and the more peaceful useful arts of agriculture and manufactures, are stole into lonely and obscure corners. The rising philosophy all turned into vestal fire, and centered in the soldier and patriot bosom. The conversation at all our publick and private meetings, turn upon the art of war. War! Horrid, horrid, din! Though we look upon ourselves quite safe here. Our frigates, and our fort, which is a regular one, on Mud Island, was planned, and partly executed by Gage's Engineer, Capt. Montresure.<sup>1</sup> Our ballast vessels and Chevaux de Frise, at the narrows and flats, will be very sufficient to defeat any ship that may attempt to annoy us.

*Extract of a letter from a Midshipman on board his Majesty's ship Otter, commanded by Captain Squires, Dec. 9.*<sup>2</sup>

Our troops, with about sixty Townsmen from Norfolk, and a detachment of Sailors from the ships, among whom I had the honour to march, set out from Norfolk to attack once more the Rebels at the great bridge, who had been lodged there some time, and had

<sup>1</sup> Captain John Montresor.

<sup>2</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, March 4-6, 1776.

erected a breast-work opposite to our fort on this side of the river. We arrived at the Fort half an hour after three in the morning, and, after refreshing ourselves, prepared to attack the Rebels in their intrenchments.

Captain Squires, ever ready, from his accomplishments as a Gentleman, and his personal bravery as an Officer, to assist my Lord in the public cause, had sent his Gunners and men to manage two pieces of cannon, who were put in the front, and ordered to begin the attack. But how can it be supposed, that with 200 men we could force a strong intrenchment, defended by at least 2000? <sup>1</sup> Yet this was attempted, and we marched up to their works with the intrepidity of lions. But, alas! we retreated with much fewer brave fellows than we took out. Their fire was so heavy, that, had we not retreated as we did, we should every one have been cut off. Figure to yourself a strong breast-work built across a causeway, on which six men only could advance abreast; a large swamp almost surrounding them, at the back of which were two small breast-works to flank us in our attack on their intrenchments. Under these disadvantages it was impossible to succeed; yet our men were so enraged, that all the entreaties, and scarcely the threats of their Officers, could prevail on them to retreat; which at last they did. The cannon were secured within the fort. We had sixty killed, wounded, and taken prisoners; among whom were the gallant Captain Fordyce, of the Grenadiers of the 14th Brigade, Lieutenants Nappier and Leslie, and Lieu-

<sup>1</sup> The British force numbered about 500, of whom 200 were regulars under Captain Fordyce and the rest loyalists and negroes. The American force numbered about 700 under Colonel William Woodford. Eckenrode, *The Revolution in Virginia*, p. 82.

tenant Batut wounded and taken prisoner; men all universally esteemed, and for whom all shed tears; but these are dried upon reflecting, that they fell fighting for their King and Country. Such was the fortune of this day, which throws the greatest honour on the men for their unparalleled courage; and I have the pleasure to assure you, I have had the approbation of all my Officers for my behavior. We set out on our return to Norfolk about seven o'clock in the evening, at which place we arrived at twelve, and the Soldiers were immediately embarked on board vessels prepared for that purpose.

December 14. The Rebels having now nothing to obstruct their passage, arrived and took possession of Norfolk, and in the evening saluted us with a volley of small arms; on which, the next morning, I was sent on shore to their Commander, to inform him, that if another shot was fired at the Otter, they must expect the town to be knocked about their ears.

The detested town of Norfolk is no more! Its destruction happened on New Year's Day! About four o'clock in the afternoon the signal was given from the Liverpool, when a dreadful cannonading began from the three ships, which lasted until it was too hot for the Rebels to stand on their Wharfs. Our boats now landed and set fire to the town in several places. It burnt fiercely all night, and the next day; nor are the flames yet extinguished; but no more of Norfolk remains than about twelve houses, which have escaped the flames!

Thus, Sir, I have given you an account of the most material occurrences, since my last, and am, &c.

*Otter, off the ruins of Norfolk, Jan. 9, 1776.*

*Extract of a letter from Boston, Dec. 13, 1775.<sup>1</sup>*

We are now almost as much blocked up by the sea as we have been for these eight months by the land. By this opportunity you will receive a confirmation of the rebels having taken the Ordnance brig.<sup>2</sup> This is a great loss to us and a great acquisition to them. The rebels have also just taken another vessel from Britain, valued at 10,000 l. loaded with necessaries for the army. These vessels have been carried into Cape Aren [Cape Ann], which is only seven leagues from the mouth of this harbour, and they were taken almost within sight of our Admiral's ship. Yet there is nothing to prevent the rebels taking every vessel bound for this port; for though there are near twenty pendants flying in this harbour, I cannot find that there is one vessel cruising in the bay. Surely our Admiral cannot be allowed to remain here much longer a curse upon the garrison. We used to say here that the suite of our former General were intent on nothing but profit; but we have more reason to complain of our sea commander. All the summer while the sick and wounded were dying daily for want of fresh provisions, not a boat was permitted to fish in the harbour till Mr. —, the Admiral's secretary, was softened down by a dollar from each boat. You may be sure we were not silent at this exaction, which was both impudent and barbarous, and after a long time got it abolished. But after this we found ourselves in a worse situation. As no dollars were paid,

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, Jan. 17, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> The ordnance brig Nancy was captured by Captain Manly late in November, 1775. Among other articles in this valuable cargo was the thirteen-inch brass mortar which General Putnam christened the Congress on its arrival in the camp at Cambridge.



fishing passports were with difficulty procured; the Admiral was never to be seen, and his secretary was always busy; so that it often cost many days attendance before a single boat could have leave to fish. You may guess what execrations were poured forth against them by all sorts of people, the sick, the wounded, and the well, the army and the inhabitants. If a vessel was fitted out by the army for to sail in quest of fresh provisions, General Gage's desiring a pass was sufficient reason for a refusal; for the Admiral and his 'spouse entertained a mortal antipathy against the General and his Lady. On a second application the reply was, that such a pass was against the Port Bill. To this it was answered that the Port Bill was not passed to starve his Majesty's troops. In such messages as these, eight, ten days, or a fortnight, were lost, and a pass was at last granted on the General's absolutely demanding it for the sake of supplying the sick and wounded who were languishing in the hospitals. A vessel detained in this manner was taken by the rebels on her return from the Bay of Fundy, fully laden with live stock. She was taken by the first vessel fitted out by the rebels and must have come safe had she not been detained as above. The disagreement between the General and the Admiral first originated with their wives; both of whom led their husbands. Every plan of the Generals that miscarried afforded matter of laughter to the Admiral's family, who sneer'd and cried out, "Well, this is Mr. General's fine plan!" The General soon had his revenge, for Mr. Admiral himself undertook to defend Noodle's Island; but the rebels soon made him retreat, defeated his marines, burnt all the hay and

barns, and carried off the live stock: Then he undertook to defend Long Island; there again he was defeated, and the women and children who resided there for their health carried off before his face: Then he undertook to defend the light house; there he suffered more disgrace than ever; it was burnt while he and his ships lay in full view: When the rebels had done their business they retired; upon which Mr. Admiral ventured to land a party of marines and a number of workmen to rebuild it; they were no sooner ashore than the rebels in their whale boats landed again on the island, and his marines and carpenters were killed or taken prisoners under his own guns. During all this Mr. and Mrs. General had their revenge, and they enjoyed it: all their cry was "Well! these are Mr. Admiral's fine plans!" In a few words our navy never made so disgraceful a figure. If our sea commander is not speedily recalled no service can be expected from our fleet. He has quarrelled with the General, the army, with all his own officers except his own hangers-on, with the Commissioners, and with all who had any business with him. After all I believe the man designs well; but his own wife says that a fit which he had on his arrival here has rendered him good for nothing.

*Extract of a letter from Boston, Dec. 15.<sup>1</sup>*

On the 11th and 12th inst. Major Gen. Clinton, with the regiments under his command, broke up the camp on the heights of Charles-town, which they had occupied in the summer, and returned to Boston. Seven hundred men, under the command of Lieut.

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Jan. 10-12, 1776.

Col. Agnew, were left posted in the redoubt erected on the heights, which the troops are to occupy during the winter. The Rebels have many posts immediately in front of our redoubts, at no greater distance than 1200 or 1600 yards; however, in this critical situation, we doubt not but we shall maintain our ground.

*A letter from Philadelphia, dated Dec. 16,<sup>1</sup> says,*

The accounts we receive from our camp at Cambridge, give us hope that they will be very well able to keep the field all the winter; we have sent every thing in our power that could be of service to them: we want indeed some stockings and gloves for them, for as yet we have not been able to furnish the quantity necessary. All our flannel and bays [baize] were conveyed thither as soon as the weather set in, to make waistcoats and blankets. They want no provision, and as to Spirituals they have several pious pastors there; among the rest the Rev. Mr. Abdiel Leonard, who I hear a few days since preached before Generals Washington and Lee, a very animated and learned discourse to the soldiery upon the necessity and importance of their engaging and continuing in the service of America, and of displaying true valour and courage in defence of her rights and liberties, from the principle of love to God and their country, from the inspired address of Joab to the host of Israel in 2 Samuel, x. 12, "Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God, and the Lord do that which seemeth good."

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Feb. 3, 1776.

*Extract of a letter from Boston, Dec. 21.<sup>1</sup>*

Ever since the 17th of June the rebels have been indefatigable in throwing up works on every favourable spot of ground around us, and of such an amazing extent that it would take at least 100,000 men to defend them. They had before entirely cut off from all communication with the country, and by means of these works have now made a complete blockade. — As they seem determined to remain the winter, if their people will stay with them, they have built deal board barracks, but we hope to destroy them with shells when the severe weather sets in. There has been nothing done by either party since last June; the absurd practice of firing upon advanced guards, which could answer no purpose on either side, has been dropped some time, so that we should hardly know ourselves to be blockaded, but for the scarcity of fresh provisions and fuel; the last article we expect to be plentifully supplied with from Britain.

Our camp on the common is broken up, and we are comfortably lodged in the empty houses in town. The troops encamped on Charles Town Heights will come over as soon as the barracks, now building for the defence of our works there, are finished, which is expected in a very few days. A detachment of 5 or 600 men is to guard them during the winter.

Gen. Washington still commands at Cambridge, and Mr. Lee, who is also there, sometimes makes himself conspicuous by sending impertinent letters to his old friends here.

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, Feb. 22, 1776.



*Extract of a letter from Boston, New England,  
December 21, 1775.<sup>1</sup>*

The Rebels, for some days past, have been erecting a battery at Phipps Farm, which it is said, will soon be opened. The new constructed mortar taken on board the Ordnance brig, we are told, will be mounted upon it; and we expect a warm salute from the shells, another part of that vessel's cargo; so that in spite of her capture, we are likely to be complimented with the contents of her lading; for all this we will be indebted to our worthy Admiral. This vigilant officer, instead of sending his squadron to protect the store ships and transports from England, has, with the utmost prudence, ordered the ships of war in the harbour to be secured with bombs all round, to prevent their being boarded and taken by the Rebel whale-boats; and for some time past he has never sent a single ship to cruize off Cape Ann, because the Rebels have some cannon mounted upon it: no doubt the Parliament will thank him on his glorious return for so effectually preserving his Majesty's ships. In town the General acts in quite a different manner: he seems to think it his duty to annoy the enemy. When we discovered the Rebels at work on their new battery, another was immediately raised against them of twenty-four pounders, and some mortars at Barton's Point. From this battery we have fired upon them for some days incessantly, apparently with good effect, though not sufficiently to make them discountenance their work. The news with us are not propitious. Quebec is taken, and General Carlton and all

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, Feb. 13, 1776.

the King's troops under him prisoners of war.<sup>1</sup> You may guess the truth of all this from the person who has favoured us with the information: Mr. George Irwing is the man: he had it from his brother-in-law, Mr. Bowdoin,<sup>2</sup> one of the Rebel Counsellors: by this you may discover that the Rebels without, and the nominal friends of government within, have a very good understanding together. This may be no news to you, though it may be to many in England. We know, that till General Howe had the command, all our former Governors and Commanders were gulled by government. These good friends were always grasping at profitable places, and we are certain many obtained them; but still they had a warm feeling for American independency, and we have invariably found them, after their large salaries were fixed, taking every measure to convince their rebel countrymen that they were their best friends; I need only mention a Post-master-General, a Surveyor-General, and our Admiralty Judges.

If the Rebels can compleat their battery, this town will be on fire about our ears a few hours after; all our buildings being of wood, or a mixture of brick and wood-work. Had the Rebels erected their battery on the other side of the town at Dorchester, the Admiral and all his booms would have made the first blaze, and the burning of the town would have followed. If we cannot destroy the Rebel battery with our guns, we must march out and take it sword in hand.

<sup>1</sup> Quebec was not taken during the Revolution.

<sup>2</sup> James Bowdoin, who had been elected delegate to the Continental Congress, but had declined the office.

*Extract of a letter from a Gentleman, dated Ship William, off Norfolk, Virginia, Dec. 25, 1775.*<sup>1</sup>

Lord Dunmore, having certain intelligence about a month since, of a large body of the Rebel Army being on the march to destroy Norfolk, because its inhabitants had professed their loyalty to Government; in order to prevent their wicked intentions, sent a party of the 14th regiment to a narrow pass through which the Rebels were to march, and erected a Fort there about 18 miles from Norfolk. This was garrisoned with 35 men, and a few Volunteers from Norfolk. The Rebels approached, and made several unsuccessful attacks, but were always repulsed with loss; till on the 8th inst. his Lordship received information, that a party of the Rebels had got over, and proposed to attack the Fort from both sides; it was judged necessary to attack the main body, which accordingly was done early on the morning of the 9th, by a detachment of the 14th, under Capt. Lesly, about 130 strong, with a party of Marines, and some Volunteers from Norfolk, and Princess Anne, in all about 350. This small detachment made a furious attack on the Rebels intrenchment, and after every effort which British Soldiers could do, were obliged to retreat, with the loss of the brave Captain Fordyce, two Lieutenants, and about fifteen Privates killed, and forty wounded, fifteen of which fell into the Rebels hands, including a Lieutenant. The Rebels were posted in great strength, 1100 in number; so what could our small party do, upwards of four to one against them, and strongly entrenched? The consequence of this repulse was, that we were obliged to

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, March 4-6, 1776.

abandon the fort, and likewise Norfolk, and take refuge on board the ships. I hope the time will soon arrive, when these rebellious Savages will be severely punished for their crimes. Some few of the Friends of Government, who fall into their hands, they treat with the greatest cruelty, chaining them to Negroes,<sup>1</sup> &c. There are now about 2000 of them in Norfolk and the neighbourhood, and they having stopt all supplies to the ships, it is imagined the ships of war will destroy the town in a few days. The Liverpool, King Fisher, and Otter, are now laying before the town for that purpose. Lord Dunmore has done every thing for the Cause of his King and Country, which man can do; and had 1000 troops arrived two months ago, he would have had Virginia totally reduced to obedience by this time.

*Extract of a letter from Savannah, in Georgia, Dec. 26, to Mr. Morrison, of Birtley White House, near Newcastle.*<sup>2</sup>

In this Province two out of three are friends to Government, but as there are neither ships nor troops to protect them, they know it is in vain to oppose the current, as the Carolina people are all in arms. The Governor<sup>3</sup> here, as well as in the other Provinces, is a mere cypher; every thing is transacted by the Committee, composed of Barbers, Taylors, Cordwainers, &c. whose insolence and pertness would raise any Englishman's indignation; for the better sort endeavour to keep their own necks out of the halter, and make use of these fellows only as cats paws. I would

<sup>1</sup> Eckenrode (*The Revolution in Virginia*, p. 84) cites one case, in which Captain Woodford handcuffed a loyalist prisoner to a negro.

<sup>2</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Feb. 26-28, 1776.

<sup>3</sup> Sir James Wright.



not, however, have you write your mind too freely to me about politics, as I know not who may intercept the letter. A son of Jonas Brown,<sup>1</sup> of Whitby, who last year settled upon the lands adjoining to where we are going, being a warm stickler for Government, got several thousands in the Back Country brought over to that interest; but about a month ago, a mob of about an hundred dissolute fellows surrounded his house, with intention to tar and feather him; upon which he came out armed, and while he was reasoning the case with them at the door, he was knocked down with the butt-end of a musquet, then laid like a calf across a horse, and tied to a tree while yet insensible, and tarred and feathered. In a few days he recovered, and found his way to Lord William Campbell, at Charles-Town, who recommended him to the Governors of Georgia and Florida. He is now at Savannah, but is ordered by their High Mightinesses to leave the Province in ten days. As to news from Boston, we have nothing farther than that Gen. Gage's army is still blocked up there, and the people all along the coast are daily leaving the Sea Port towns, for fear of the ships of war.

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Browne, an Indian trader, who had ridiculed the revolutionary party, was tried before the Committee of Safety of Atlanta and sentenced to be tarred and feathered unless he recanted and took the oath of allegiance to the new government. This he refused to do and the sentence was carried out with great severity. As a result of his treatment he became an inveterate enemy to the revolutionary movement. McCrady, *South Carolina in the Revolution*, p. 35.

1776



*Extract of a letter from the Otter sloop of war, dated off the ruins of Norfolk, 3d of January, 1776.<sup>1</sup>*

I have the pleasure to assure you that this rebel town of Norfolk is in ashes. It is glorious to see the blaze of the town and shipping. I exult in the carnage of these rebels. The signal was given from the Liverpool, and in an instant the place was in flames. We are now proceeding on this business, and will burn every port on the sea shore.

*Extract of a letter, dated New York, Jan. 6, 1776.<sup>2</sup>*

This colony contains about 200,000 souls, of which, by an exact return, 40,000 are able to bear arms; from whom deduct 2000, as lukewarm and disaffected, which leaves 38,000 men attached to the American cause. The militia of the colony is well regulated by the Convention; 9500 are appointed as minute men, properly officered, and allowed the pay of the continental troops, for the extra days they muster above the time prescribed by law. Ammunition is distributed to them at the public expence, by the several county committees. They are tolerably well armed, but by the spring will be as compleatly furnished as any troops in the world, contracts having for some time past been made for that purpose, by and under the inspection of gentlemen who have the cause at heart. A sufficient quantity of intrenching tools are

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, March 5, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> *London Evening Post*, Feb. 15-17, 1776.



made, and their camp equipage preparing. They have a good train of brass field artillery, of their own casting, and a vast plenty of iron ordnance. The militia is commanded by one Major, and six Brigade Generals. This colony is far better prepared for defence, than the Massachusett's was last spring. All our neighbours are in a better state. The present convention of the colony exists till May next; during the recess the public affairs are conducted by a Committee, or Council of Safety.

There are now 26 compleat regiments at Cambridge, of 632 effective men, which amounts to 16,422. The Connecticut troops returned home after the expiration of their time. That Colony is now raising 19 regiments, of 900 effective men each. New York has raised four, of 750 each. Jersey two, of 632, and Pennsylvania five of 632 effectives. The number raised in the Southern colonies, I cannot inform you. The army at Cambridge is now exceedingly well provided with ammuniion and artillery.

General Wooster<sup>1</sup> commands at Montreal. Our last advices from Canada are dated the 7th of December. General Montgomery was then before Quebec, with 4000 Provincials and 5000 Canadians; he was waiting for his artillery to come from Montreal. Upon its arrival, there is no doubt but he would soon oblige General Carleton to surrender, who has in garrison under his command, to defend the place, 1053 men, consisting of English and French merchants, emigrants, Newfoundlandmen, sailors and marines.

<sup>1</sup> Brigadier-General David Wooster.

*Extract of a Letter from New York, Jan. 8.*<sup>1</sup>

By a vessel from the West Indies, arrived at Providence, we learn that a Proclamation from St. James's was lately published at the Island of Barbadoes, forbidding the Inhabitants of the Island holding any Correspondence with the united Colonies, on Pain of being deemed Rebels and Traitors. Similar Proclamations, it was expected, would be published in all the English West India Islands.

The 6th of Dec. at Quibble Town, Middlesex County, Pisquata Township, N. Jersey, Thomas Randolph, Cooper, who had publickly proved himself an Enemy to his Country, by reviling and using his utmost Endeavours to oppose the Proceedings of the Continental and Provincial Conventions and Committees, in Defence of their Rights and Liberties; and he being adjudged a Person of not Consequence enough for a severer Punishment, was ordered to be stripped naked, well coated with Tar and Feathers, and carried in a Waggon publickly round the Town — which Punishment was accordingly inflicted; and as he soon became duly sensible of his Offence, for which he earnestly begged Pardon, and promised to atone as far as he was able, by a contrary Behavior for the future, he was released and suffered to return to his House in less than Half an Hour. The Whole was conducted with that Regularity and Decorum, that ought to be observed in all publick Punishments.

<sup>1</sup> *Daily Advertiser*, Feb. 27, 1776.

*Extract of a letter from St. Mary's County, in the province of Maryland, dated January 12, 1776.<sup>1</sup>*

I could wish to speak more favourably of this colony, but a disposition to the full as repugnant to the rights of Great-Britain, has been manifested here, as in the province of Massachusetts, only with less abilities to defend it, and less enthusiasm to carry it into execution. The first men with respect to capacity and fortune are on the side of government; but the rabble, which in this country as in every other, form by far the major part, often oblige them to be cautious and secret. Our Governor,<sup>2</sup> notwithstanding his amiable qualities had secured to him the affections of the whole colony, is almost entirely deserted, and lives at Annapolis with his Secretary, and a very few of his European friends. The mob have not done much mischief either on Patuxent or Potomac rivers, but they have shewed a brutality which proves the cause which they have unhappily espoused to be both desperate and unjust.

Our old and valuable friend Mr. Lee, at Cedar Point, in the next county, in a conversation relative to the Bostonians, inadvertently damned them for destroying the tea. This was immediately made public, and a mob of near 1500 or 2000 men assembled, and marched to within three miles of his elegant house, from whence they sent deputies to him; who pretending to be his friends, and that through their influence they had prevailed upon the mob to stop, or they would have proceeded and laid his house level

<sup>1</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, March 16, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Robert Eden, alone of all the royal governors, departed from his post in peace.

with the ground, desired him, in order to appease their resentment, to accompany them to where they were assembled, and sign a paper retracting what he had said. His wife and daughters were by this time apprised of the storm, and in fits. Yet, in this situation he left his family, as the only means by which he could hope to save their lives and his house, and accompanied by the rebel chiefs set out for their associates. When he arrived, they gave him an instrument to sign, and insisted on his going on his bare knees — when, to the astonishment as well as confusion of them all, he manfully disdained the slavish imposition.

“Take” (said our hoary and venerable friend) “the poor remains of a life almost exhausted in your service. I have lived among you upwards of seventy years, and with reputation; but if at this advanced age the malice of my enemies can drag me at their pleasure from the peaceable enjoyments of domestic felicity; or if the blind and uninformed rage of party, which contends for liberty and the rights of humanity, at the very instant it is imposing the greatest and most disgraceful of all slavery, *a restraint upon the mind*, can with impunity triumph over natural justice, and force me to a concurrence in measures against the conviction of my conscience; it is time to take an eternal farewell of the world. You may indeed kill me, but you shall not force me to make an ignominious denial of the truth, or to retract *one* syllable I have asserted.

“I have hitherto maintained through a variety of stations the rights of my fellow-citizens; and acquainted as you all are with my disposition, it can



hardly be expected I would submit to a disgraceful surrender of my own. Act as you please; I have *lived a freeman*, and it is my unalterable resolution to *die one*." Upon which he turned round, and left them in a profound silence, while he pursued his journey home, uninterrupted by the *Sons of Liberty*, as they call themselves.

These outrages have not prevailed much among us, but this shews to what cruelty and injustice they are capable of proceeding; and it also proves how far a manly fortitude will embarrass and confound them. Mr. Lee has remained unmolested, and the rioters have been universally condemned, even by their associates, for their brutality.

*We have been favoured with the following extract of a letter received yesterday by a gentleman in the city from his friend, the lady of an officer at Boston, which the public may depend on as genuine.*<sup>1</sup>

BOSTON, January 15, 1776.

The transports from Cork arrived here the 30th of December last after a three months voyage, during which we suffered every difficulty and danger that can be supposed. On our arrival here, we found every one breathe the spirit of war, or rather every one expecting the horrors of war, as the troops from their situation are quite inactive. We are every day expecting a bombardment of this place from the Provincial army, who have invested us with treble force, and who have beside lately taken one of our artillery ships, laden with ammunition and mortars, the wisdom of the Ministry having sent her out with-

<sup>1</sup> *London Evening Post*, Feb. 17-20, 1776.

out a convoy. No manner of business is carried on here but the military; the five churches are turned into barracks,<sup>1</sup> and the people who have commodious houses, obliged to give them up for the use of the soldiery; all kinds of provisions difficult to be had, and those of the worst kind sold as follows: Mutton 2od. per lb. beef 1s. 6d. butter 2s. and every thing else in proportion.

In the midst of these horrors of war, we endeavour as much as possible to forget them. There is a very elegant play-house erected here,<sup>2</sup> which we resort to frequently, and which is not without performers of merit. I was one of a number who crouded it the other night, to see a new piece, written by Gen. Burgoyne, called "The Blockade of Boston"; but just before the curtain drew up, we were alarmed by some firing from the lines, which induced the whole audience to make a precipitate retreat. It turned out, however, a false alarm; but in this situation do we hourly live.<sup>3</sup>

Great expectations are drawn from General Burgoyne's visit to England, it is said he has some plans of conciliation on the tapis. May God grant they may be successful! The late Admiral is upon his return, of whom they talk strangely; but as to particulars I am not at liberty to write, for reasons that must readily occur to you. Adieu!

<sup>1</sup> According to Frothingham (*Siege of Boston*, p. 328), the Old North Chapel and the steeple of the West Church were pulled down for fuel, the Old South Church was made into a riding school, and Brattle Street Church and Hollis Street Church were used for barracks.

<sup>2</sup> Faneuil Hall had been made into a playhouse.

<sup>3</sup> Major Knowlton's attack on the Charlestown guards took place while the play was in progress, on the night of Jan. 8.

*Extract of a letter from Boston, Jan. 20.<sup>1</sup>*

You desire I would tell you the State of the Fleet. By what I can yet learn they are only a nominal Fleet; almost all of them came out short of their lowest Peace Compliment, and have had no Opportunity of recruiting their Numbers; so that from Death and Desertion, and other Accidents, they are reduced to a State of Inactivity. The whole of our Numbers put together would not man one half of the Ships, which are likewise in want of all Sorts of Stores and Necessaries. You may depend on it, the Remissness complained of did not arise from the Admiral, who frequently left his own Ship in too defenceless a State (in my Opinion) in order to keep his Cruisers at Sea. On the Information I have procured, I do not scruple to assure you he has been cruelly used. What we are to do who succeed I know not. Much will be expected, but little can be done. Those Ships who have cruized have suffered much, and are much dispirited. The Truth of the Case is: You in England complain of them; we in America complain as much of you: This is general. All Ranks of Officers think themselves neglected at home; and those of the Fleet have never served under the same Disadvantages they do at present. Ill manned, ill provided, ill supplied: They accuse you in England of being the Cause of their ill Success. The Ordnance Vessel, said to be taken, is, I believe, drove to the West Indies, as I cannot find any Authority to suppose she is in the Hands of the Provincials. Eight Ships are arrived that had Stock in, but they lost almost the whole on the Passage. The Arrival of a Ship, should she con-

<sup>1</sup> *Public Advertiser*, Feb. 27, 1776.

tain nothing, serves to enliven the Garrison, and to keep up their Spirits. We intend to form Packets for the Amusement of our Friends of the Fleet; most of which have for their Comfort the Change of Administration, and particularly that of Lord S—— [Sandwich].

*Extract of a genuine letter from an Officer in the King's army at Boston, to a near relation in London, dated Boston, Jan. 20.<sup>1</sup>*

We had some cannonading here a few days after Capt. Stewart sailed. The Rebels had broke ground, and begun to make a redoubt upon a small height of land called Phillip's [Phipp's] Farm, 997 yards from a redoubt they have upon a hill called Cobbler's [Cobble]-hill, and 1749 yards from their general post upon Mount Pisgah, near Cambridge. The fire began by the Scarborough frigate, which lay near Charles-Town, and was seconded by some shot from an eighteen pounder from their redoubt upon Cobbler's-hill, one of which struck the frigate; upon which we fired several shot at them from a twenty-four pounder, and some shells from a ten-inch mortar from the heights of Charles-Town, the hill we took from them the 17th of June, where we have three posts well fortified. We relieve the troops on that side every fortnight. It was my turn to be on duty there at the time. We made them at first desist from working; but when night came on, they having a strong working party, and were so very industrious, that by break of day the next morning they had thrown up a strong breast-work; and by continually working at night they have

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, Feb. 27, 1776.



compleated their business; but it is not a post of much consequence, therefore do not think we shall attempt to destroy it at present, as it is under the fire of the two hills, Mount Pisgah and Cobblers-hill. On the 8th inst. between eight and nine o'clock at night, we were alarmed by some of the enemy, who came over a small neck of land by a mill upon Charles-Town side, and came into some houses that were not destroyed on the 17th of June, where they surprised and took one Serjeant and three private men prisoners, who belonged to a wooding party, after which they set fire to the houses, and retreated under a heavy fire of cannon and musquetry from one of our redoubts. Among the rest they had got a stout fellow of our's (a grenadier) prisoner, who pretended to be lame, and that he could walk but slowly, upon which they made him deliver up his arms; and the rebel Captain who commanded the party told his men to retreat, saying, "I swear I will take this serpent of a regular under my charge:" but upon going over the neck of land, the grenadier struck the captain a severe blow on his face with his fist, took him up in his arms, pitched him headlong into the mud and then ran off. But what is most extraordinary, a new farce was that night to have been acted in Boston, called the Blockade of Boston; the play was just ended, and the curtain going to be drawn up for the farce, when the actors heard from without that an attack was made on the heights of Charles-Town, upon which one of them came in, dressed in the character of a Yankee Serjeant, (which character he was to play) desired silence, and then informed the audience that the alarm guns were fired; that the rebels

had attacked the town; and that they were at it tooth and nail over at Charles-Town. The audience thinking this was the opening of the new piece, clapped prodigiously; but soon finding their mistake, a general scene of confusion ensued, they immediately hurried out of the house to their alarm posts; some skipping over the orchestra, trampling on the fiddles; and in short, every one making his most speedy retreat, the actors (who were all officers) calling out for water to get the paint and smut off their faces; women fainting, &c. I was upon guard at the advanced lines before the town of Roxborough, and we expected a general attack that night, but the rebels knew better, and in a few hours every thing was quiet. We expect a reinforcement in spring, when I hope we shall give the scoundrels a hearty thrashing, and put an end to the business. Provisions here are amazingly dear; one small cabbage was sold the other day for three shillings, and every thing also in proportion; however we are all in good spirits, and hope for better times. The rebels have the impudence to fit out privateers. We suspect that they have taken a brig laden with ordnance stores, as she sailed from St. Helens the same day we did, and is not yet arrived. General Clinton, with some troops, is going on an expedition; it is kept a secret where; but we suppose to Virginia, or some place to the Southward.

*Extract of a Letter from Philadelphia, brought by the way of New-York, dated Feb. 13.*<sup>1</sup>

The saints of this place are many of them turned sinners; the *friends* who have money are as averse to

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, April 3, 1776.

drawing their purse-strings as to drawing a trigger. Paper currency is become plenty here, yet every one wishes for the ready, though no one dare speak for fear of the displeasure of the Congress, which is as arbitrary as the Inquisition in Spain. Soldiers are raising, and the river fortifying below this city, though you know vessels of any burden, even a large frigate, could not come up here. Two hulks are moored, in order to be sunk, should an attempt be made, and thereby the channel blocked. Believe me, many people here are heartily tired of our great ones knight errantry; for I am afraid, on a formidable appearance of the King's troops, the Congress will not find so many friends here as they imagined.

*Extract of a letter from Charles-Town, dated Feb. 15.<sup>1</sup>*

Lord William Campbell is still on board a man of war in the Harbour. Our town is well fortified. The following is a list of Forts, Batteries, and ships of war at South-Carolina:—Sullivan's Island, 26 guns, 18 and 32 pounders; Fort Johnson, 21 guns, 18 and 32 pounders; Haddal's Point, 6 guns, 18 pounders; Fort William Henry, 12 guns, 32 pounders; Wilkin's Fort, 23 guns, 9, 12, 18, and 32 pounders; Littleton's Fort, 11 guns, 18 pounders; Craven's Fort, 7 guns, 18 and 32 pounders; Granville's Fort, 5 guns, 12 pounders; Gadsden's Fort, 7 guns, 32 pounders; Gibbs's Wharf, 9 guns, 18 pounders. Ships, Prosper, 26 guns, 12 pounders; Brig Comet, 18 guns, 6 pounders; Schooner Defence, 12 guns, 6 pounders. Two Regiments of Provincials, one Regiment of Artillery, six Regiments of Militia and one Regiment of Riflemen.

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, April 17–19, 1776.

*The following is an extract of a letter from a Gentleman in Norfolk, to his Friend in Glasgow, dated Schooner Betty, Norfolk Harbour.*<sup>1</sup>

*Feb. 16.* A number of people from the Fleet, with a few Soldiery, are landed on Mill-Point, and are busy just now entrenching it, without being any way retarded by the Rebels, and the work is near compleat.

*Feb. 17.* A man of war, with several transports, are in view, and it is supposed General Clinton is at their head, and will touch at this place.

*Extract of a letter from a Gentleman on board the Liverpool, Norfolk Harbour, Virginia, February 17, 1776.*<sup>2</sup>

We have been pretty quiet here since the burning of Norfolk. On General Clinton's arrival with a small party of men, the Rebels retired about twelve miles up the country, burning the houses, and driving off the cattle as they went. We now get plenty of provisions brought us both for the Officer's tables and the Ships Companies, but dearer than usual. I am well informed by the Gentlemen of the country, who have taken refuge on board the King's ships here, that we shall have all sorts of provisions in great plenty as soon as the forces arrive; that the people in the lower countries are very weary of their new Masters, and will join heartily in driving them back to the mountains, whenever a few troops are landed to enable them to make head against the Rebels; and that they will be able to supply not only the ships and troops that may come this way, but likewise the army and navy at Boston with flour, pork, pease, butter,

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, April 8-10, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, April 8-10, 1776.



corn, &c. &c. and have cattle and stock of all kinds, and horses and carriages, if they should be wanted to the northward, in any number there can be a demand for, all at a very reasonable price.

By the last accounts we had from Boston both parties remained inactive; the winter was severe, and most of the Rebels had gone home to their own habitations to keep themselves warm. There was plenty of salted provisions in Boston, and likewise of fresh meat, mostly from Nova Scotia; but the last article was dear. Both the seamen and soldiers are remarkably healthy, which they attribute in great measure to the scarcity of rum and other spirits; for where they can be come at cheap, soldiers and sailors will always disguise themselves.

Very few of the store ships from England had got in, and scarce any of the live stock had got safe; not half a dozen out of three hundred of any kind. The Liverpool, Roebuck, and Otter, are here at present. A sloop of war and a tender are gone to Delaware River, with some other ships appointed to block up the harbour of Philadelphia. The Mercury, with two transports, is gone to the Southward to Charles-Town and Georgia. Capt. Lindsay has been some time cruising off Cape Fear, for Peter Parker's fleet.

*Extract of a letter from Norfolk, in Virginia, dated Feb. 20, 1776, to a Merchant in Liverpool, by the Friendship, arrived at Glasgow.*<sup>1</sup>

In my last I acquainted you with the destruction of the greatest part of Norfolk, by the Shirtmen, on the 1st of January; they continued plundering and de-

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, April 15-17, 1776.

stroying until the 6th inst. when, at four o'clock in the morning, a signal was made, every house from Mr. Farmer's Plantation, Tan-works, Windmills, Church, &c. were set on fire, and so quick you could not tell which began first. The people are in great distress; they are driving them all up to the Back Country, and they intend serving all Norfolk County, Princess Ann, and the lower part of Nancymond in the same manner.

The Shirtmen remain at Kemp's Great Bridge, and Suffolk, and stop all provisions coming to the shipping. If troops do not soon arrive, this part of the country will be in a most dreadful situation. Capt. Chesholm and family have lived in a tent in the woods since New Year's Day. My wife and children stay most of the time with him, but I have never been so far from the River. Thank God we are all healthy, and have plenty of provisions at present, and are in great hopes of soon having forces to drive those Savages into their lurking holes.

*Extract of a private letter, dated Ship William, Norfolk Harbour, Virginia, Feb. 26, 1776.<sup>1</sup>*

There are now here the Roebuck, Liverpool, Dunmore, Kingfisher, and the Otter ships of war; and the Rebels are in the neighbourhood raising several new regiments.

General Clinton, with Mercury frigate, and two transports, with 150 Soldiers, are now here, on their way to Cape Fear, to join Governor Martin, who is at the head of 3000 Highlanders and Regulars in Government service.

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, April 15-17, 1776.

The total defeat of the Rebel General Montgomery, before Quebec, has struck the Rebels with a panic; from which, I fancy, they will not soon recover. He was killed, and the whole army cut off, or taken prisoners. This is a great affair for Government, and Governor Carleton has acquired immortal honour. We are very impatient to hear from your city. We are to believe Administration are determined on vigorous measures. The Rebels are in great distress in New England for want of bread.

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, Feb. 28.<sup>1</sup>*

The late appearance of General Clinton off New York has put us upon our mettle, and give us a sample of what we may expect on the landing of the King's troops. The militia have been called out and exercised, and a report spread that an order would be sent from the Congress to embody them for the defence of those places which may be attacked. A murmur on this surmise appeared throughout the ranks, particularly among those who live in the back settlements, who say, that their presence is more wanted at home to defend their habitations from the inroads of the Indians, and procuring subsistence for their families. — I am much afraid that a hearty concurrence will not be met with throughout every rank of people, should the urgency of affairs require their assistance.

*Extract of a letter from Newport (Rhode Island), Feb. 29.<sup>1</sup>*

Wednesday, an armed schooner from Boston, ar-

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, May 3, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, May 29, 1776.

rived in this harbour, and immediately proceeded up the bay to Capt. Wallace, who lay near Hope; the next day the whole ministerial fleet moved to the upper part of Prudence, where, on Friday, they landed a number of men, who attacked and took a windmill, on which they hoisted a flag by way of triumph, and then burnt the mill and four or five other buildings. Prudence had been evacuated some days before, and all the live stock carried off, but it is feared they found a considerable quantity of potatoes, which had been left behind in cellars and holes, on account of the severity of the weather. All the fleet came down to this harbour on Saturday evening.

*Extract of a letter from New York, March 2.<sup>1</sup>*

An affair has lately been discovered here which has given no small uneasiness to the Congress. Some manœuvres of Governor Tryon convinced that Assembly that he was perfectly acquainted with their proceedings, and they were at a loss to guess from what quarter he could get his intelligence. At length, a doubt arose in the breast of Mr. Duane,<sup>2</sup> (a principal Member of the Congress), that his Valet,<sup>3</sup> who had formerly lived with Governor Tryon, had at night, when he went to bed, taken his Minutes out of his pocket, which he had copied, and sent to his late Master. He informed the Congress of his suspicion, and it was agreed that he should put, as usual, some Minutes in his pocket, but they should be fictitious ones, in order, if possible, to ascertain his Servant's

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, April 17-19, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> James Duane, delegate for New York.

<sup>3</sup> James Brattle.



dishonesty before he was apprehended: This was accordingly done; the Servant, as it is supposed, copied and sent them to the Governor, who soon found that the Servant either had imposed on him, or was himself imposed on, and therefore gave him notice to take care of himself; he fled immediately, and is said to be sent to England in the last ship that sailed from hence.

*Extract of a letter from a Gentleman in Boston, dated previous to the embarkation of Gen. Howe.<sup>1</sup>*

Your good sense will, I hope, approve of my being silent as to the situation of our little army, but, for the rest, I must refer you to the London News-Papers, which really afford us very great amusement; yet sometimes we are astonished how men, who pretend to rationality, can write, and how others can swallow their innumerable and absurd falshoods. The Americans, like their brethren with you, have been deluded by Patriots, Fishers in troubled waters, and hot-headed Republican Preachers.

These poor people are so fond of liberty and property, that their furious zeal has dried up all the channels that naturally lead to such blessings, for they are actually poor and wretched, and more enslaved by their Congress than the subjects of Morocco, and numbers are at present in the situation of our countrymen, under the tyranny of Cromwell, and most devoutly wish for a restoration of peace and plenty.

We are told that Mr. Washington has been rebuked for not driving us into the sea, but he is too sensible

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, June 12-14, 1776.

to imagine that faith alone can remove mountains; yet it is rather probable that we shall soon quit this place, and not idle our time here any longer. I have many reasons to believe, that had his cool and judicious advice been timely followed, both parties would have had less reason to complain of each other. He was totally against burning the light-houses, which answered no end, except that of increasing animosity. He was against the weak project of starving us in Boston, whilst the port was open to supplies. He demonstrated publickly, that it was true policy to sell us all the provisions we wanted, by which they would acquire abundance of specie, a commodity very scarce among them; but he had the mortification of being over-ruled, and the money was spent in England and Ireland. He was against the Non-importing Resolution, knowing that the English Restraining Act would naturally follow.

His generous spirit was for allowing the friends of Government the liberty of thinking for themselves, and not by fines, imprisonment, confiscation, and even death, drive thousands into the land of real Liberty; but the Saints had a great passion for the estates of Sinners. I am assured, he said, he wondered that the Parliament did not deprive them of succeeding in England to any fortune, real or personal.

The real sentiments of true Englishmen are liberal, open, and generous. They detest Slavery, and only contend for a just and equal partition of Taxes, that every part of the Empire may contribute their proper share to the support of the whole. This is the light in which I see the present contest; but I know that the

pious Saints of this Continent have accepted, with great chearfulness for a century past, above one hundred millions of English pounds, either in specie or in protection; and yet, when Britain required a small assistance, they thought their liberties in danger, and absolutely refused. They depend on the distance of Britain to secure them from chastisement, but they forget the power of Britain, and seem totally ignorant that the Cause of England is the Cause of all Europe.

Your News-Papers were, a year ago, full of concessions of America, all made in London; but I aver, that no Provincial or General Congress offered to pay, or even apologized for, the Tea destroyed, or proposed any rational terms of Reconciliation. One word more, and I have done for the present. The unhappy notions of this people must be suppressed, let the expence be what it may; for otherwise your fertile fields must be drained of inhabitants, and every man of the smallest property, or his children must begin the world again in a distant region.

*The following account is taken from a letter, dated Philadelphia, March 6, 1776, and received by the vessel arrived in Ireland from New-York, and plainly shows on one hand how well the Provincials divine concerning Boston, and it is supposed their suggestions concerning Quebec will prove equally as true.*<sup>1</sup>

I was favoured with thine, dated the 11th of last September, and note the contents; no doubt but in your news-papers you have an account of how matters go on in these parts; almost all the inhabitants of North-America are joined hand and heart in the

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, May 9, 1776.

grand cause, and at all events will risque life and fortune for their liberty.

In my former I gave thee to understand, it was my opinion that all the power of England would not be able to bring the colonies to comply with the British Parliament; the event has shown, as yet, that I was right. I now apprehend the time is not far off, when the colonies will set up an independent standard, to which thousands will flock to shake off the yoke of Great-Britain. I am sorry for the cause of these disturbances, as I always had, and still have, a veneration for the Hanoverian family, and that they have lost the affections of their subjects in this part of their dominions. I am afraid, that as they have lost their affections, so they will lose North America; my reason is, that a people, who can make a King by creation, can by the same rule take that delegated power from him, instances of which have often happened in Britain.

We have received an account that the King is sending over Commissioners to treat with the Colonies, but they might as well stay at home, unless they deny the Parliament of England have any power to tax America, and send home all the soldiery.

You have heard, I suppose, of the death of General Montgomery at Quebec; his funeral sermon was preached in this city by a church of England minister.<sup>1</sup> The continental army indeed received a check in the affair when he fell, but they are now joined by a large body, and are carrying on the siege, and it is supposed will soon be in possession of that fortress and of course of all Canada.

<sup>1</sup> Provost William Smith of the College of Philadelphia.



The topics of conversation here are on several heads, viz. on Commissioners from the King on a treaty, the surrender of Quebec, the departure of the Regulars from Boston, &c. As for the Commissioners I expect they will go home as they came. I expect Quebec will be possessed by the Provincials in a few days, and that Boston will fall into the hands of the same before long. Large quantities of gunpowder, saltpetre, and fire arms, have been brought here from various parts. We have 60,000 now in pay, besides twice as many militia, well disciplined; a force too powerful for any England can send against it, and I am afraid matters have gone too far ever to be made up.

I suppose there are in our hands above a thousand of the King's troops as prisoners; six hundred of them were taken at St. John's, Chamblee, &c. Among them are many officers. I dare say, the next time I write it will be from a free post, as I believe the people of this country (a few excepted) are for independency. As this goes by an acquaintance whom I expect will deliver it to thee in person, for further particulars I refer thee to him.

*Extract of a Letter from Virginia, March 6.<sup>1</sup>*

An Express is just arrived from Cross-Creek, with an Account of 2000 Highlanders from Cape Fare [Fear], joining Governor Martin, with his Force consisting of above 3000, from the Back of Virginia; this Junction has been long expected, and we are informed they have had a Skirmish or two, the Particulars of which are not come to hand, but it is from some very

<sup>1</sup> *Daily Advertiser*, April 25, 1776.

good Reasons believed, that the Rebels had come off with the worst of it.<sup>1</sup>

*Extract of a letter from New York, dated March 7, 1776, brought by the Two Sisters, arrived at Newry in Ireland.*<sup>2</sup>

The reinforcements intended for Gen. Wooster before Quebec, are countermanded; it is thought here (for it is only supposition, as the Congress are very secret in their affairs) that from intelligence they have had from England, those Troops cannot be spared from hence, and that the siege of Quebec will be raised, and our Troops return to Montreal, where they will fortify themselves to the best advantage. Very little cash is seen here; the paper money of the Congress, somehow or other, has got into circulation, though no one likes to take it, yet they dare not say so. Specie has undoubtedly been hoarded up; but should the misers be found out, the Lord have mercy upon them, say I! Tarring and feathering would be the least of their punishment for being such enemies to their country: For that is the cant phrase.

*Extract of a genuine letter from Philadelphia, received by a Gentleman of undoubted veracity, dated March 12.*<sup>3</sup>

No doubt you feel anxious for your country, and will be pleased to hear how matters stand on this side the water. I shall therefore begin to the northward with Quebec: — The whole Province, except the city, submitted to the Continental arms, under the brave General Montgomery, before the first of December;

<sup>1</sup> The Highlanders and Regulators of Northern Carolina under Donald McDonald were met and defeated by patriot troops at Moore's Creek Bridge on February 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, April 29–May 1, 1776.

<sup>3</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, May 16, 1776.

and notwithstanding the severe climate he marched with his men to join Colonel Arnold at Quebec, before which he lay till near the last. When the time of many of his soldiers being expired, he resolved on an attack, in which he fell, as you will see by the papers; since which our people have kept up the blockade of the town with about 500 men. The hardship those men have gone through is hardly credible, and too long for this letter. When the news of Montgomery's fall and defeat reached the other Colonies, it did *not* damp their spirits, but *raised* them. The Congress voted *more regiments*, which were immediately raised; and in two months from *this defeat*, 2000 new raised troops joined General Arnold before Quebec; and by the middle or latter end of March, *that army* will amount to 5 or 6000 men, when Quebec will again be attempted. Boston is still in the hands of Howe, but we are in hourly expectation of hearing of their flight, as General Washington was to begin to cannonade it last week. We have 2000 men before it — plenty of *stores*, which have arrived here this winter, the want of which has hitherto prevented our doing any thing. The frequent threats of ministerialists, and the late arrival of Clinton at New-York, has put that province in a warlike posture; the women, children, and most of the valuable effects are removed into the country; the town possessed and fortified by batteries and breast work, *and 5000 men who are constantly at work*; so that in a short time it will be very strong; there is also 15 or 20,000 men ready to go to their assistance on a very short notice; so that every hour after the first twenty-four of any alarm, will produce hundreds of well armed men.

Rhode Island is pestered by Wallace and his ships, who hardly ever lands but he loses more or less of his men; he carries on the war in a very piratical manner. Every now and then he lands to steal sheep, &c. at which time, if he can, he burns houses, and *murders the helpless*, not daring to wait; and as soon as he sees any of our armed men coming, *he flies*.

Pennsylvania is still unattacked, but preparing for the worst. Our river is defended by cheveaux-de-friez sunk in the channel (on which no less than three vessels have been sunk by the carelessness of pilots) a very large and strong chain; a battery; a 20 gun ship; a large floating battery to carry 20 eighteen pounders; and 13 row gallies, with an eighteen pounder in their bows, and 50 men properly provided in each; three battalions of regulars; and from 30 to 40,000 militia.

Nothing has happened in Virginia since the entire destruction of Norfolk; but they *are there*, as well as in North and South Carolina, preparing for the most vigorous defence; and by the month of April will have 30 or 40,000 men ready to take the field — all which will act jointly, or separately, as exigencies may require. Amongst *these* are a great number of *riflemen*. But where are your resources, say you? Money we have sufficient. By our industry abroad, we have got safely landed in different parts of this Continent, (notwithstanding *the low arts of the Ministry and all their men of war*) upwards of 100 tons of powder, 150 tons of saltpetre, and a large quantity of small arms, which will supply us for the first part of the campaign; for the other we expect to be under no obligations to any state on earth for the stores, &c.



At New-York we have a founder who has already cast 14 or 15 excellent brass field-pieces. We have a foundry for iron ordnance from . . .<sup>1</sup> pounders to swivels. As to iron shot, we have plenty, and on a pinch could supply the *whole world*; and as for small-arms we are not . . .<sup>1</sup> least lost, except for the locks, in which . . .<sup>1</sup> there will soon be a great number of hands employed. The means made use of to introduce the manufacture of saltpetre, has met with the desired success; so that the women make it in many parts of the country. From the various accounts we shall by Midsummer have 30 or 40 tons, or more, *of our own* manufacture. In one manufactory they make 50 cwt. per week. At Newbury, in New England, they make at least 100 lb. per day: In short, it is now as easy to make saltpetre, as it was to make *soft soap*. As to brimstone and lead, *the bowels of our country* produce more than sufficient for a war *of 1000 years*.

In a short time we shall have at least 30 ships of war, from 38 guns downwards, besides (if the Ministry carry on their piratical war) a great number of privateers. When *you* return, you will be surprized to see what the mother of invention has done for us; I really believe, if we are harrassed for one year more, we shall not want *any* thing from Europe.

The Ministry have often unjustly accused us of looking after Independency; but what they pretend *to dread, their measures will in a short time bring forth*. "Common sense,"<sup>2</sup> which I herewith send you, is read to all ranks; and as mnay as read, so many become converted; tho' perhaps the hour *before were most violent against the least idea of Independence*.

<sup>1</sup> Obliterated.

<sup>2</sup> By Thomas Paine.

This summer's campaign will, I make no doubt, set *us free from the shackles of education*; and the King of Britain, instead of being the idol of Americans, will be of little more importance here than to frighten little children.

You will see by the papers, that our people have opened their batteries on Boston, *which is destined to the flames*. I wish I could convey to you a small idea of the ardour which inflames our young men, who turn out with more alacrity on the least alarm, than they would to a ball.

I am, your's, &c.

*Extract of a letter from New-York, March 13.*<sup>1</sup>

Today an Express arrived from the Eastward; to-night by the post, my advices are, that on the night of the 2d inst. (Saturday) we threw three bombs into Boston from Lichmore's [Lechmere's] Point, the enemy returned a number. Two seven-inch, one ten-inch mortar, and the Congress burst; the latter after firing twice or thrice. Two or three bombs thrown in from Roxbury, and two twenty-four pounders fired, nothing in return. Monday 4th, at night, took possession of Dorchester with 2000 men, under General Thomas, and 300 carts; before morning had an astonishing work compleated on the top of each of the two greatest heights; some of the carts made three trips, others two, without interruption; the night amazingly favourable, three of our men killed, firing on both sides. The two hills we have taken possession of command the front of Boston and south side of the Harbour. At noon, the 5th, the enemy made a

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, May 13-15, 1776.

weak ineffectual fire for two hours. In the evening they embarked about 2000 men in five transports, and sent them down towards the Castle; a floating battery was also towed down; before they reached the Castle, the wind blew fresh at south, and forced three of the transports ashore on Governor's Island, where they lay all night. The 6th all quiet. In the evening many Soldiers were landed from the transports in front of the town. The Select Men of Boston, or some of the principal Inhabitants, apprehending Howe was about to embark, desired him not to destroy the town upon his leaving it. He told them he would not, if General Washington would not disturb them in their embarkation; they desired leave to go out with a flag to tell him so; granted; don't hear that he made any promise, and I do not suppose he will, for it is undoubtedly a trick of Howe's, in order to get away his cannon and stores as well as men. A letter to our Congress, I am informed, intimates that General Washington apprehends the enemy will decamp and steer for this city: Our works are going on, and if they come, hope we shall be ready for them.

*From an Officer of Distinction at Boston to a person in  
London, March 3, 1776.<sup>1</sup>*

For the last six weeks, or near two months, we have been better amused than could possibly be expected in our situation. We had a theatre, we had balls, and there is actually a subscription on foot for a masquerade. England seems to have forgot us, and we endeavoured to forget ourselves. But we were aroused to a sense of our situation last night, in a manner un-

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, May 15, 1776.

pleasant enough. The rebels have been for some time past erecting a bomb battery, and last night began to play upon us. Two shells fell not far from me. One fell upon Col. Monckton's house, and broke all the windows, but luckily did not burst till it had crossed the street. Many houses were damaged, but no lives lost. We expect some carcasses tonight, if the fear of destroying their own property does not prevent it. What makes this matter more provoking is, that their barracks are so scattered, and at such a distance, that we can't disturb them, although from a battery near the water-side they can reach us easily.

*4th March:* Bad news this morning from New-York. A man who calls himself Lord Sterling,<sup>1</sup> has put himself at the head of 3000 men, in conjunction with that arch rebel (Lee) and has driven all the well-affected people from the town of New-York. If something is not speedily done, his Britannick Majesty's American dominions will probably be confined within a very narrow compass. The rebel army is not brave I believe, but it is agreed on all hands, that their artillery officers are at least equal to our own. In the number of shells that they flung last night not above three failed. This morning we flung four, and three of them burst in the air.

*5th March.* This is, I believe, likely to prove as important a day to the British Empire as any in our annals. We underwent last night a very severe cannonade, which damaged a number of houses, and killed some men. This morning at day-break we discovered two redoubts on the hills on Dorchester

<sup>1</sup> William Alexander, of New Jersey. He used a Scotch title which he had ineffectually claimed.



Point, and two smaller works on their flanks. They were all raised during the night, with an expedition equal to that of the Genii belonging to Aladin's wonderful lamp. From these hills they commanded the whole town, so that we must drive them from their post, or desert the place. The former is determined upon, and five regiments are already embarked. A body of light infantry, under the command of Major Musgrave, an excellent officer, and a body of grenadiers, are to embark tonight at seven. I think it is likely to be so far a general affair, that we shall take our share in it. Adieu balls, masquerades, &c. for this may be looked upon as the opening of the campaign.

It is worth while to remark, with what judgement the leaders of the rebels take advantage of the prejudices, and work upon the passions of the mob. This 5th of March is the anniversary of what they call the bloody massacre, when in (I think) 1769,<sup>1</sup> the King's troops fired on the people in the streets of Boston. If ever they dare stand us it will be today; but I hope tomorrow to be able to give you an account of their defeat.

*6th March.* A wind, more violent than any thing I ever heard, prevented our last night's proposed expedition, and so saved the lives of thousands. Today they have made themselves too strong to make a dislodgement possible. We are under their fire whenever they chuse to begin; so that we are now evacuating the town with the utmost expedition, and leaving behind us half our worldly goods. Adieu! I hope to embark in a few hours.

<sup>1</sup> The Boston massacre occurred March 5, 1770.

*7th March.* When the transports came to be examined, they were void of both provisions and forage. If any are got on board today, it will be as much as can be done. Never troops in so disgraceful a situation, and that not in the least to their own fault, or owing to any want of skill or discretion in our commanders, but entirely owing to Great Britain being fast asleep. I pity General Howe from my soul.

*9th March, Transport.* I have slept one night on board; the troops are embarking as fast as possible. I mistook when I imagined the works already made could destroy the town; but the rebels possess a hill so situated,<sup>1</sup> that if they pleased to erect a battery, it would entirely consume us. They, as yet, have not proceeded to make a work, nor do they attempt to molest us in our embarkation. It appears as if there were at least a tacit agreement between Washington and General Howe.

*10th March.* Today the horse transports are ordered to fall down to Castle William, a fort about three miles from the town in our possession; it commands the harbour, and the troops now there will embark the last. The retreat from the town of Boston is to be covered by a large body of grenadiers, and light infantry, and the 5th and 10th regiments. The Fowey, a man of war of twenty-eight guns, commanded by Captain George Montague, covers the retreat by water. A packet is to sail, I hear, as soon as the army is clear of the town; so probably I shall not have it in my power to inform you whether we are attacked in our retreat or not; if I have I will.

*Nantasket Road, March 17.* According to my pro-

<sup>1</sup> Nook's Hill.

mise I proceed to give you a brief account of our retreat, which was made this morning between the hours of two and eight. Our troops did not receive the smallest molestation, though the rebels were all night at work on the near Hill, which I mentioned to you in my last letter; and we kept a constant fire upon them from a battery of four twenty-four pounders. They did not return a single shot. It was lucky for the inhabitants now left in Boston, they did not. For I am informed every thing was prepared to set the town in a blaze had they fired one cannon. The dragoons are under orders to sail tomorrow for Halifax, a cursed, cold, wintry place, even yet. Nothing to eat, less to drink. Bad times, my dear friend. The displeasure I feel from the very small share I have in our present insignificancy, is so great, that I don't know the thing so desperate I would not undertake to change our situation.

*Extract of a letter from Annapolis, in Maryland,  
March 15, 1776.<sup>1</sup>*

On the 5th instant, about seven in the evening, two boats that are kept down the bay to reconnoiter the motions of the men of war in Virginia, returned with the alarm that a man of war and two tenders were close at hand, and expected their intention was to destroy this city, which threw the inhabitants into the greatest confusion: what with the darkness of the night, thunder, lightning, and rain, cries of women and children, people hurrying their effects into the country, drums beating to arms, &c. I can assure you it was by no means an agreeable scene. The

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, May 24, 1776.

wind shifting in the storm to the N. W. prevented the ships getting up that night. In this interval the inhabitants were moving their effects as fast as possible; we moved a few West India goods about ten miles, but were not so much alarmed as many others, having no notion of their firing on the town immediately without any insult being offered them. However the wind kept them back till the second day, when they appeared off the harbour, and to our great joy standing up the Bay without coming to. Governor Eden sent a boat after them to know what were their instructions, as he had no notice of any ship of war coming into this Province. It proved to be the Otter Sloop, Captain Squire, and two armed tenders, intending to take or destroy a large armed ship fitting out at Baltimore, and get fresh provisions, but not fire on any town. When the Otter got up to the mouth of the river Potopfico [Potapsco], that leads up to Baltimore town, she got a-ground sundry times, endeavouring to get in; not being able to effect this, she sent in her tenders and took a large ship loaded with wheat and flour belonging to Baltimore, which also got a-ground in coming out, there not being more than 14 or 15 feet water at low tides, which always make with a N. W. wind. Before they could get her off the people of Baltimore got their armed ship ready, well manned, and fell down the river. On the tenders seeing her they sheared off with dispatch and left their prize. The Otter likewise got under sail, and made the best of her way down to the mouth of this harbour, where she came too; we were pretty well prepared in case they had attempted to have committed hostilities. Captain Squire sent ashore a



flag to the Governor and Council of Safety: matters were not settled that evening. A second was sent next morning, when they agreed to go off without doing any damage or getting any provisions; but we have too much reason to expect a second visit from them in a few days with a much stronger force, when in all probability they will destroy our city. We have force enough to prevent their landing: God forbid they should attempt it, as it must bring on a horrid scene indeed. We most heartily wish the Commissioners were arrived that we understand are appointed to settle matters, and most sincerely hope a stop may be put to so unnatural and bloody a contest, but are afraid it has gone too far now to be settled any other way than by the sword and the loss of the Colonies to Britain.

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, dated March 16.<sup>1</sup>*

By Capt. Bernard, from Nantucket, we hear, that a ship of 300 tons burthen, which had arrived at Sandy Hook from England, and was ordered from thence to Boston, had got aground in a gale of wind between Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket, when some people from Martha's Vineyard fitted out an armed sloop, and sundry small boats engaged the ship, and after an obstinate battle took her, wounded the Captain with several of the men, and carried them in to Martha's Vineyard. We also learn, that a transport, bound from Boston to New York, was cast away on Cape Cod, and boarded by our people, who found on board her a quantity of dollars, with ten ton of lead and shot.

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, May 13-15, 1776.

*Extract of a letter from Savannah, Georgia, March 17.*<sup>1</sup>

I embrace this opportunity of informing you of the present state of our affairs, and beg you'll communicate the same to Captain M——l, having waited here ever since October last for a cargo either to Tobago or England, find our hopes quite fruitless from the Congress's proceedings of the 4th instant, to set fire to and consume the merchant ships in this port, in consequence of the men of war demanding the release, and using means of compulsion; before the tenders could cover the shipping, the Provincials devised methods, and consumed a brig belonging to Liverpool, and a ship to London, the Inverness, Masilberry, master, the rest of the shipping found retreat from being light, and we narrowly escaped by remaining still, and expeditiously cutting from along side the vessels on fire in the same tier with us. We are now prisoners of theirs, the Captain has been under confinement ever since the sad catastrophe, and yesterday marched into the country unknown to us where, but generally supposed to Philadelphia. We are to remain on board until further orders, and agreeable to their desire have unshipt our rudder, and sent the running rigging ashore, to prevent our escaping. This is a melancholy circumstance to all of us, nor do we know how to extricate ourselves, no person can fly from the town either up or down the river to prevent intelligence. There are several other vessels which share the same fate with us, particularly the Georgia Planter, Capt. Inglis, who accompanies Capt. Wardell both in the character of prisoners, and I must confess are both genteely and honorably treated;

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, May 15, 1776.

there was a slight skirmish near this place between a party of the King's troops and a smaller one of the Americans, when three of the latter were taken prisoners, who are now on board the men of war.<sup>1</sup> I should transmit the particulars of all the proceedings here, but am pushed for time by an expeditious and secret conveyance of this to one of our packets down the river at Cocksborough, where the men of war lye, and per first convenient opportunity will give you the particulars as near as possible; we have none killed or wounded, though we have taken up on our decks near a hundred small shot. I imagine the Chief Mate will send Capt. M——l as minute an account as time will permit of, Capt. Wardell being deprived of that privilege. We know not the fate yet either of the ship or the rice, being about 700 barrels, not being allowed to discharge it or move the ship, on pain of being burnt immediately. Most of our people have left us, and the boy Sam is run away, and is now in the Provincial service, from on board the ship Unity. Yours,

F. F——n.

*Extract of a letter from Boston Harbour, March 17.<sup>2</sup>*

The enemy have suffered more upon our evacuating the town of Boston, than any defeat they have received upon forcing their entrenchments. When dispositions were made for the embarkation of the army, Washington made three divisions of his men: The

<sup>1</sup> The three men on board the men of war were Captain Joseph Rice, who had been sent by the Council of Safety to execute their order to dismantle all ships in the harbor and had been forcibly detained, Captain Raymond Demeré and Lieutenant Daniel Roberts, who had gone under a flag of truce to demand the release of Captain Rice.

<sup>2</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, May 11, 1776.

center, under his command, extended from Stoney Bridge to Willis's Creek, having the head quarters at Cambridge; the right wing extended to the point of Dorchester Neck, under the command of Putnam, whose quarters were at Roxbury; the left wing extended to Mystick River, likewise under the command of a Major General. Many parties of Riflemen flanked the wings of the Rebels with light field-pieces; and their artillery were formed in two divisions between the center column and the wings. Their rear-guard consisted of detached parties, forming a line from Medford to Deadham and Milton. In this position the enemy remained for five days, before the last detachment of the army were embark'd. During the manoeuvre, a general fire from the shipping covered the embarkation, as well as an immense cloud of smoke balls from the center of the town of Boston. — At the same time the first brigade of the rebels, consisting of the following regiments — Putnam's, Prescott's, Bridge's, Gerrish's with three companies of riflemen, in great regularity entered the town. As soon as they passed Marlborough-street, the souterrain of mines, extended from Southack-street to Beacon-street, School-street, Water-street, Battery-Marsh, to the Old Wharf near South battery, took effect, and with a dreadful explosion made an excavation of earth that must have formed a very deep and broad fosse across the town.

During this moment of havock and confusion, the second brigade of the rebels, Pribble's, Gardiner's, Woodbridge's, Fry's, Brewer's, Nixon's regiments, with four companies of riflemen, marched up Orange-street with great rapidity to support the distress and



slaughter the first brigade must have suffered from the mines. — Just as the second brigade passed Castle-street, the second line of mines, traversing that street, took effect. In less than five minutes, the mines upon the neck were sprung, and then Boston became an island. — The greatest distress and consternation appeared among the rebels, who literally had entered Boston with drums beating and colours flying. Some then collected upon the common, and were endeavouring to form the small remaining parties of the two brigades. The terror of the rebels became so general, that many swam from Foxhill to the main land, and a crowd ran down Summer-street to Windmill Point, from whence many swam to the shore. — The information of this slaughter of the rebels is given us by a Sargeant of Gardiner's regiment that our boat took up swimming from the town, and has been just brought on board. During the explosions of the mines, the enemy kept a continual fire from their batteries on Dorchester Neck. We heard the two dreadful explosions upon Bunker's Hill. I have only time to mention, our engineers have gained us a victory by their skill in managing the fuses of their mines.<sup>1</sup>

*A letter received from Annapolis in Maryland, dated  
March 17,<sup>2</sup> says,*

On the evening of the 9th inst. a sloop of war and another armed vessel, fell in with two American privateers of force on this coast, when a very severe cannonading ensued, which lasted till near eleven o'clock

<sup>1</sup> I have been unable to find any evidence to substantiate this account.

<sup>2</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, May 27, 1776.

the same night; what became of the vessels afterward we cannot say, but the next day a flag staff, with a St. George's ensign, was taken up at sea by a small schooner belonging to Baltimore, and the bodies of several English sailors were found floating on the sea, therefore it is imagined one of the government vessels must have been sunk, and the other taken and carried to Rhode Island, as the privateers belonged to that port. The inhabitants of this city are removing their effects into the country, as they have been apprised of an intention of its being destroyed by the King's ships; but if once they attempt to land, a dreadful slaughter must ensue, as we have a very powerful force here, determined and ready to receive them.

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, March 19.<sup>1</sup>*

Gunpowder has lately fallen here considerable in price on account of the great quantity of that article which has lately arrived in America from foreign parts. Several hundred new Firelocks have been lately made by some foreigners, which after being in the water some hours, will do as much execution as if they had never been wet. The 17th inst. the Cornet, of 28 guns, commanded by Capt. Charles Atkins, belonging to this port, arrived here in a distressed condition, she having met an English Frigate off St. Kitt's, when an engagement ensued, which lasted six glasses, wherein the frigate was obliged at last to sheer off, as she had her Mizzen-mast shot away; and it is supposed two thirds of her crew were killed, as they fought Yard-Arm and Yard-Arm during the greatest part of the action.

<sup>1</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, May 25, 1776.

*Extract of a letter from New York, March 21.<sup>1</sup>*

As we expect a visit from General Howe, we are putting every thing in the best posture of defence; the women and children are removed into the country; our militia are out, as also our volunteers; General Washington, by advice has detached six regiments to our assistance; two thousand men are coming from Connecticut, and thirteen other regiments will soon be here, when we shall have an army of at least twenty thousand men, and have already two hundred pieces of cannon to salute the King's forces, should they attempt to land.

*Extract of a letter from Boston, March 21.<sup>2</sup>*

By the time this reaches you you will have heard of our *retreat* from Boston; an *evacuation* or necessary *derilection*, perhaps it will be termed by the official announcers of the circumstance on your side the water, but I honestly confess, though one of the *military refugees*, that the *first* word in its *intrinsic* import, is veritably expressive and descriptive. — You may probably ask what were the compelling means of our leaving Boston, I will simply answer, because Boston was no longer *tenable*, and indeed we were almost induced to believe that administration had given up the contest, and that we were at liberty not only to leave Boston *locally*, but America *totally*, for from the beginning of October to this date, not an iota of instructions or orders had we received from England.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, May 18, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, May 13, 1776.

<sup>3</sup> In General Howe's letter to Lord Dartmouth dated March 21, 1776, telling of the evacuation of Boston, he stated that he had received no let-

A week or ten days before we were drove from Boston, 'tis impossible to give you an adequate idea of our situation, without hopes, without provisions, sick, and *spiritless*, cut off from all communication, and seemingly abandoned by those who had sent us on so nefarious an expedition. Gen. Howe did every thing a man could do to carry a justification in *appearance* of what *mentally* from my soul I believe he condemned. With astonishing celerity the Provincials had erected batteries at Dorchester Heights, from which they commanded three-fourths of the town, and on their will it depended to destroy it. They gave us an antepast of what we were to expect by the fiery mission of several bombs the day before we quitted; four persons were killed, a soldier and three of the townspeople. After the convention with Washington for the purpose of the terms to be agreed on, a surrender of the town was the issue; but, as a salvo to our honour, we were permitted to *march out* before they *marched in*. When that took place, never since military etiquette has been known, was exhibited such a scene of confusion and irregularity; women, children, troops, and merchandize, indiscriminately thrown into boats, to be conveyed to the transports. We are now for Halifax, where (under the rose) 'tis my opinion we shall demonstrate as capital a figure as we did at Boston. If a sufficient force arrives we may keep that some time; if not, leaving that, your friend, with many worthier persons, will be in the same state Milton leaves our first parents, "The world all before us."

ters from the Government since October 22, 1775. Force, *American Archives*, 5th Ser., v, 458.



*Extract of an authentic letter, dated Boston-Harbour,  
March 22.<sup>1</sup>*

About ten days ago, I wrote you two or three lines, wherein I informed you of our being obliged to leave Boston. I find the vessel I sent my letter on board is not yet sailed, have therefore taken a second opportunity of acquainting you more particularly of our reasons for so doing. Our situation has been very disagreeable, but more from want of provision than any thing else. You will, no doubt, be surprised, when I tell you, that we have not enough to serve our small army for three weeks, which is one of the principal reasons of our leaving this place, a circumstance I was quite ignorant of till within this day or two. We have received no accounts from England for upwards of five months. We are in daily expectation of a provision fleet from Ireland, but I am afraid we shall miss of them, as we expect to sail in a day or two. The General had a meeting on the 10th instant,<sup>2</sup> of all the General and Field Officers, when it was unanimously agreed to leave Boston. We were a week employed in getting our artillery, stores, &c, on board the different ships, and making the necessary preparations for our retreat. On the 17th instant we all embarked on board our ships, without the least molestation. General Howe covered our retreat with the Grenadiers and Light Infantry. Several methods were tried to bring the Rebels to an engagement be-

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, May 7, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> According to the official announcement in London General Howe resolved on the 7th of March to remove the troops under his command to Halifax, and to take with him such of the inhabitants, with their effects, as were desirous of remaining under the protection of his Majesty's forces. Frothingham, *Siege of Boston*, p. 320, note.

fore we left Boston, but all to no purpose. We are inclined to think, the reason of their not obstructing us in our retreat was, for fear of our burning the town, which, had they fired a single shot, would have been done. Several inhabitants have fitted up vessels, and are going with us. We have blown up Castle-William, which commands the entrance into the Harbour. We have accounts from New-York, that General Lee has taken possession of the town, and turned all the friends of Government into the country. The Rebels, we are told, (by two Deserters which came to us the day before we left Boston) have sent several of their regiments to the Southward, so that they appear much alarmed at our quitting Boston. Mr. Washington, it is reported, purposes going to Halifax as soon as we are sailed, where he expects to see us again, but I much doubt it. Our fleet, consisting of upwards of an hundred sail, are lying at the entrance of the Harbour, ready to sail the first fair wind. The ship that I am in has 300 Soldiers, and 30 Officers, besides some passengers. We are so full, that I am obliged to take up with a berth that I have been used to before, which is the Horlop. I flatter myself our passage will not be long; if it should, I believe we shall be all poisoned. As I have not time to write to any of the rest of my friends, I must beg you will be kind enough to remember me to them all, but particularly to those at the Manor-house.

*The following extract is copied from an original letter received from Nantasket:*<sup>1</sup>

One hundred and forty vessels, great and small, are

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, May 6, 1776.

arrived in this road from Boston, in the most distressed condition that can possibly be described, with General Howe, his army, and about 1500 inhabitants (friends to government) of that place. Where they are bound to, we are at a loss to know. Certain it is, however, they are all drove from Boston by General Washington's army, after a cannonading of fourteen days, whereby one third of the town was destroyed, and a number of the King's troops killed, and a great many much wounded, owing chiefly to the quantity of shells the Provincials kept continually pouring into the town. The English troops, and the Tories, embarked on board the above vessels in the greatest disorder and confusion pen cannot describe, leaving behind two month's [other letters say only a month's] provisions, a large quantity of cloathing belonging to the regulars, a number of puncheons of rum, together with the artillery, cannon, and the greatest part of the ammunition. General Howe left seven men of war at Boston, one of which, by some accident, ran on shore, and it is feared the crew are made prisoners, and the vessel, with all her cannon and stores, fallen into the possession of the Provincials.

*Extract of a letter from a Master at Arms on board one of his Majesty's ships of war in Boston Harbour, dated March 23.*<sup>1</sup>

The town of Boston is now inhabited by about fifteen thousand provincial troops, who are fortifying that place in the strongest manner with the greatest alacrity, under the direction of four Prussian, one French, and some American engineers. The army at Cambridge has been lately reinforced with five

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, May 20, 1776.

thousand fresh troops (recruits.) The garrison of Boston have hoisted a flag, which is kept continually flying, and has on it the following motto, "An appeal to Heaven."

Yesterday the Mercury man of war, and a vessel in Government service, arrived here with five American vessels, which were coming from the Dutch West India islands, laden with ammunition, &c. The above vessels had taken eight of them, but falling in with three armed ships belonging to the rebels, they retook three of them, and damaged the Mercury so much, that it was with difficulty she reached this port in a very leaky condition.

*Extract of a letter from Georgia, dated March 24.<sup>1</sup>*

*This letter, after reciting all the particulars relating to the depredations of the Provincials, upon the stores, ships, and other private property, and molesting the King's people belonging to the ships of war, says:*

Several of the Marines were sent on shore by the Commanders of his Majesty's ships of war now lying here to procure necessities, when they were attacked by a party of Rebels, who fired at them, and being considerably superior in number, and feeling others flocking to join them, the Marines thought it prudent to retreat to the ships, which they all effected, except one man, who having received a wound, was left behind, and seized by the Provincials, who immediately tied him to a tree, afterwards cut his legs, thighs, and arms, into several pieces, and then left him in this tortured condition. A few days ago another piece of barbarity was also done by this lawless

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, May 20-22, 1776.



rabble; the Marines were sent to a small Island near this place to cut wood, assisted by some of the Natives (King's friends) but so soon as the Rebels knew what was going forwards, they collected a large body, and proceeded to said Island, which occasioned the Marines to take to their boats, but some of the inhabitants fell a sacrifice to their merciless fury. One man in particular who was pursued, and had no other chance to save himself but to take to the water and swim to the other side, he had no sooner got a small distance from shore, than a party of the Rebels was upon the beach, when one of them fired at the poor creature with a rifle gun, and shot him through the head. Such barbarities as these you will hardly credit, but I can assure you they are undoubted facts.

*Extract of a letter from Annapolis, in Maryland, March 24.<sup>1</sup>*

On Tuesday the 5th inst. about seven in the evening, we received information that a man of war and two tenders were coming up the Bay, and had taken a New England schooner lying at the mouth of the Pat[uxen]t. The wind blowing hard at S. W. the general expectation was that they would be at this place in a few hours, the necessary dispositions were made to receive them in case they thought proper to land, and Expresses were dispatched to Baltimore Town, and other parts of the Province, to communicate the intelligence. Between twelve and one o'clock on Tuesday night the wind shifted, and came on a violent gale at N. W. and so continued all day on Wednesday, during which time we had not any certain information where the vessels were. On Thursday there was

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, June 14-17, 1776.

a light breeze up the Bay; about two o'clock the vessels hove in sight, and at half past three came opposite this city with some prizes, and stood up the Bay. Off the Mouth of this Harbour they burnt a shallop laden with oats, and in the evening anchored near the Mouth of Patapsco. On Friday night we received intelligence, that the vessels were the Otter sloop of war and tenders; and the general opinion was confirmed, that they were going to Baltimore to take or destroy the ship Defence.

On Saturday we expected to hear of an engagement, and the rather, as at Baltimore the celerity of their movements exceeded expectations: the Defence being got ready on Friday night towed down the River, manned with a number of brave fellows, all whom were Americans in their hearts, and most of them by birth; several small vessels attended, crowded with men to assist in case of an engagement, which in all probability would have been a bloody one.

Capt. Nicholson<sup>1</sup> got under way early on Saturday morning, resolved to retake Hudson's ship (a large vessel the Otter had made prize of, laden with wheat and flour,) and to engage the Otter, if she moved to assist the tenders, which guarded the prize; the morning was thick and hazy, and the Defence got nearer to them than was expected, before they discovered her bearing down upon them; those on board the tenders appeared much alarmed, and pushed off with precipitation, and on a signal given more hands were sent by the Otter to assist in rowing them off, which was effected with difficulty: Three or four small prize vessels were abandoned, besides Hudson's ship.

<sup>1</sup> Captain James Nicholson commanded the Defence.

The Defence having manned the prize, and seeing the Otter get under way clued up her courses, and prepared for battle, expecting her to come up, but the Otter having lain about two hours, as if wanting Capt. Nicholson to come down, at length bore away, and in the afternoon came to anchor off this port. Capt. Nicholson continued his station for some time, and having performed this gallant action returned with the prizes to Baltimore.

On Sunday the Otter sloop and her tenders made sail and went down the Bay, having restored several prisoners taken in a vessel in the Mouth of Patapsco.

*Extract of a letter, dated on board the Brig Allerton, Cockspur, in Georgia, March 24.<sup>1</sup>*

In my last I promised to give you as full an account as I could of our present disturbances here. You will observe by my different letters, of the Resolves, that hath from time to time been entered into here by the Congress, Councils, and Committees, all of which seem in one part or other to distress trade and ruin thousands. Your schooner, Maria, would have sailed by the time appointed, had not the Delegates from this Province arrived, and brought positive orders from the Continental Congress, to admit no vessel to depart the Province before the 1st of March, which the Congress here agreed to. Some of Masters of vessels applied for liberty to go away in ballast, but were refused. There were at that time about twenty vessels in port, which were obliged tamely to put up with these orders, they having no redress, and being in hopes that they would be permitted to sail on the

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, May 14, 1776.

first of March. About the 15th of January arrived at Cockspur, three of his Majesty's ships, viz. the *Tamer*, of 16 guns; *Syren*, of 28; the *Cherokee*, of 10: This alarmed the people on shore, being apprehensive they came to destroy the town, tho' it was declared they only came for provisions, and not in a hostile manner, provisions were refused them, so now began the worst of our troubles. The country was immediately alarmed, and as many people as could be got were brought to town: Those who were disaffected to their cause, were either disarmed or bound up by a parole, not to aid or assist any of his Majesty's ships or troops with any thing whatever, or go on board. This parole was only granted to persons of character. The Council of Safety Resolved, to put the town in a state of defence in the best manner they could, and erected a two gun battery on one of the Wharfs, and another above it on a hill of eight or ten guns; at the same time sinking a vessel about two miles below the town in the narrowest part of the Channel, to prevent the vessels coming up. — This alarm caused a general move of the property of the inhabitants out of town; I moved as much of the store goods as I possibly could, on board the *Maria*, and ordered her a few miles up the river, at that time thinking it the safest place; some time after this the *Syren*, of twenty eight guns sailed, which eased the minds of the people a little: But greater was the alarm, when the *Scarborough*, of twenty guns, and two transports with Marines arrived. The inhabitants then could not be convinced but they came in a hostile manner, though assured to the contrary. This arrival caused the Council of Safety to pass a Resolve, to confine the



Governor and his Majesty's Council to the Province, and obliged them to give their parole that they would not quit the same; some time after this, they demanded a second parole, which they refused; as that was the case they thought themselves cleared from the first. The Governor with his family made their escape, and got on board the Scarborough and have remained there since. This gave a great alarm, which still increased, when one of his Majesty's ships, with some armed vessels and two transports, made their appearance about four miles below the town. Upon expectation that all the vessels would be permitted to sail the first of March, I removed the schooner down the river again about the 25th, in order to be in readiness; and on the last of Feb. three vessels got permission to depart the Province with their cargoes, but the Council of Safety reconsidered that resolve, and made a second one, that no vessel should depart before the first of May, for fear the rice on board should fall into the hands of the King's troops. On the second the vessels below the town weighed (except one to command there) and proceeded up the back river, a river not at all suspected by the inhabitants. They fired several shot from their battery, but to no effect. The Hinchinbrook, of ten guns, was to go up this back river and come down a breast of the town; at the same time the Marines from on board the transport landed on an island a breast of the town, marched over the same, and got on board the shipping about three o'clock in the morning undiscovered. The Hinchinbroke unluckily got a ground, so was of no service. The Marines being on board, orders were given to remove the shipping as high up

the river as possible, intending to carry them down the back river, at this time mentioning, they only came to carry off the shipping, in order to get the rice, and not against the province. The people on shore knew nothing of the troops being on board, until they sent off some of their people to order the vessels to be unrigged, and the rigging sent on shore, agreeable to the Resolve of the Council of Safety the day before: this messenger was detained, which gave them some suspicion. They then sent two other messengers, who were likewise detained; at this they hailed several times, but to no effect, they then began to fire with their musquetry to no purpose; they then dragged some cannon to a convenient place, and began to fire, which was returned from a merchantman with four guns, and continued for some time. About four o'clock the tide answering, orders were given to proceed up the river as fast as possible. The people on shore finding this, and their cannon not suiting the intended purpose, they resolved to do all in their power to burn the shipping; they accordingly went on board a ship lying lower than the rest, and set her on fire; she belonged to London, was full loaded and worth about 13,000 l. sterling: this ship drawing too great a draft of water to drift up the river. They then got a schooner, hoisted her sails, set her on fire, and turned her adrift. This vessel unluckily caught the Nelly, Captain Fletcher, of Liverpool, which was likewise consumed, and had it not been for the activity of the seamen in towing these fire-ships on shore, many more must have shared their fate. On the 4th, the ships of a great draft of water were obliged to lighten by throwing some of the cargo over-board.

After many difficulties we got down with the schooner, and about ten other vessels, it not being possible to get the remainder away at that time.

*Extract of a letter received in town from Nantasket, dated the 29th of March, which was brought by a vessel arrived in Ireland.*<sup>1</sup>

General Howe has left this place with the vessels that came from Boston,<sup>2</sup> seven of which were drove on the shoals near Nantasket, in a gale of wind, and wrecked. The people that were on board were saved. We have a number of armed cruizers upon our coast; and it is much if some of the above vessels do not fall into their hands. When they left this place, it was said they were in very great distress.

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, April 4.*<sup>3</sup>

The greatest encomiums are paid to the pamphlet called *Common Sense*. All sorts of people read it, and admire it. Our little faction of Quaker Tories have published, what they call, an answer to it. It is called *Plain Truth*. It is not a contemptable performance, but very inferior to *Common Sense*. Our news-papers are replete with essays on the subject; and the general tenor of them is independency. *Common Sense* has made innumerable converts to that side. It is said to be the work of Dr. Franklin, Messrs. Dickinson, and Adams. Pemberton,<sup>4</sup> the

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, May 8, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> After the evacuation of Boston the fleet remained for more than a week at Nantasket; it sailed on March 27 for Halifax, leaving a few ships under Commodore Banks to protect any supply ships that might come later from England.

<sup>3</sup> *London Evening Post*, June 6-8, 1776.

<sup>4</sup> James Pemberton. The author of *Plain Truth* was never known.

Quaker, assisted by Mr. Galloway, formerly speaker of the New York Assembly,<sup>1</sup> are the reputed writers of *Plain Truth*.

*Extract of a letter from Virginia, April 12.*<sup>2</sup>

The people here are relieved from their anxieties respecting the side the Indians intend to take; neither money nor presents have been wanting on the side of people who call themselves friends to government, to persuade them to take up the hatchet against the Colonies; but the appearance of several of their own acquaintance in the back settlements, people who belonged to Roger's Rangers in the late war, had more effect on their warriors and headmen, than all the promises and bribes the former were able to make them. The Indians are all in motion; several of their chiefs have already waited on the Congress, and others are set out on the same purpose, which has given great joy to the well-wishers of this country.

*Genuine extracts of letters by the ——— from New York,  
April 12, 1776.*<sup>3</sup>

If you have any idea of our situation, you must be solicitous to hear from us. When you are informed that New-York is deserted by its old inhabitants, and filled with soldiers from New-England, Philadelphia, Jersey, &c. you will naturally conclude the environs of it are not very safe from so undisciplined a multitude as our Provincials are represented to be; but I do believe there are a very few instances of so great

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Galloway, former speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly.

<sup>2</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, June 19, 1776.

<sup>3</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, June 7, 1776.



a number of men together with so little mischief done by them. They have all the simplicity of plowmen in their manners, and seem quite strangers to the vices of older soldiers; they have been employed in erecting fortifications in every part of the town; it would make you sorry to see the place so changed; the old fort walls are demolished in part, though that is an advantage to the Broadway, as it opens the view there greatly; there is a battery carried across the street, erected partly at Lord Abington's expence; for the Fascines were cut out of the wood that belongs to the Warren estate; you may remember it lies opposite to —, and shaded one half of the road called New Road; it was a beautiful wood Oliver Del——y [Delancy] had been nursing these forty years; it looks in piteous state now. Mr. D——y hoped to have it somewhat spared, by telling the New-Englanders, who were cutting it, that a third part belonged to one of the protesting Lords;<sup>1</sup> one of them answered, "Well, an if he be such a great liberty-boy, and so great a friend to our country, he will be quite happy that his wood was so happy for our use." He was obliged to retire and leave it to their mercy. — You remember Baynard's Mount covered with cedars; it commanded a prospect exceedingly extensive; the top of it so cut away, that there is room enough now for a house and garden; there is a very good and a very advantageously situated fortification there erected; round the hospital another; in short, every place that can be usefully employed in that way, either is or will be

<sup>1</sup> Susannah, eldest of three daughters of Oliver Delancy, had married Sir Peter Warren, and their youngest daughter had married the Earl of Abington, one of the protesting lords.

used. You may recollect a sweet situation at Horne's Hook, that Jacob Walton purchased, built an elegant house, and greatly and beautifully improved the place: he was obliged to quit the place, the troops took possession and fortified there. When Mrs. Walton received the order to go out of her house, she burst into tears, for she was fixed to her heart's desire. By what uncertain a tenure do we hold the good and desirable possessions of this world? When you were here a few years ago, did we dream that Englishmen would drive us to so much distress and misery as we do and are like to suffer? Oh, the houses in New York, if you could but see the insides of them! occupied by the dirtiest people on the continent (for the empty houses are almost all taken up by the soldiers); Kennedy's<sup>1</sup> new house, Mallet's,<sup>2</sup> and one next to it, had six hundred men in them; if the owners ever get possession again, I am sure they must be years in cleaning them, unless they get new floor, and new plaister the walls. Governor Tryon looses his credit with the people here prodigiously: he has lately issued a proclamation, desiring the deluded people of this colony to return to their obedience, promising a speedy support to the friends of government, declaring a door of mercy should be open to the penitent, and a rod to the disobedient, &c. It is generally a matter of laughter and surprise, that he could do any thing so weak and ill-judged. The friends of Government were provoked at being so distinguished, and the friends to liberty hung him in effigy, and printed a dying speech for him. A letter too was intercepted from him, hastening Lord Howe to New York, as the

<sup>1</sup> Archibald Kennedy.

<sup>2</sup> Jonathan Mallet.

rebels were fortifying. These things have entirely lost him the good will of all of the people; and to compleat this conduct, he refused letting the passengers to England, by the packet, go, without taking an oath, they were not to give any kind of information of what passed in America, to any person whatever, beside the King and his Ministers. The gentlemen all complained much of the oath, and except one whom necessity obliged to go, were determined to stay, rather than take it. It has been dispensed with however from the Americans. You cannot think how sorry I am the Governor has so lost himself; a man once so much beloved, his absence from the government so much regretted, his return so pleasing to most people, now spoken of with contempt and distrust. O Lucifer, once the son of morn, how fallen! General Washington is expected hourly; General Putnam is here, with several other Generals, and some of their ladies. All communication with the men of war has been stopped some days ago, and a guard kept to the watering place, to prevent their getting any; in consequence of which a skirmish happened on Sunday last; our troops took prisoners some men from a barge that came for water; a 20 gun sloop fired upon our men, but only one was wounded, as the story goes. There is no such thing as coming to the truth of any thing now-a-days. To the great joy of its old inhabitants, Boston is left by the (to speak in the style of the times) ministerial troops; with great precipitation did they quit it, and to their credit left the town in a much better condition than was expected. Major — left a letter on the table, directed to the owner of the house he lived in, intimating he expected to pay

the rent, and was willing to make good any damage the furniture may have received. It was a day of general rejoicing and thanksgiving the day the Bostonians entered their town again, though we New Yorkers have been in fear ever since of their coming here; the variety of the reports keeps one's mind in agitation. I believe they have been seen off a dozen times, and sometimes just into the Hook; we have been so often alarmed now, that I fancy, like the boy in the fable, report may cry out till the wolves are in the fold, before we shall attend to her. Clinton and Howe, to be sure, have set the continent a racing from Boston to Carolina. Clinton came into our harbour; away flew the women, children, goods, and chattels, and in came the soldiers flocking from every part. No sooner was it known that he was not going to land here, than expresses were sent to Virginia and Carolina to put them on their guard; his next expedition was to Virginia; there they were ready to receive him; from thence, without attempting to land, he sailed to Carolina. Now General Howe is leading us another dance. Some companies from Philadelphia, coming here, were ordered back again, on a report of his intention to pay the city a visit. Since that it is said that part of the fleet are already gone to Halifax, part to either Carolina or Quebec, yet I am not certain to which, but from my very soul wish they were going up the river Thames. There is a talk of erecting batteries at a place called *Red Hook*, which will make it very dangerous for men of war to lie in our harbour. We lovers of peace have all our hopes rested on the commissioners; if wishes could have filled their sails, they had reached the continent e'er this. A



pamphlet entitled *Common Sense* has converted thousands to independence that could not endure the idea before; if I knew how, would have sent it to you, for I think you want common sense in England very much, or you would have found out some means of making peace with us before we had gone to so vast an expense, and put you to so much greater. — is among the runaways, and only waits for a boat to carry her goods to —. I am chagrined at losing a neighbour. Whenever my friends are going I accuse Lord North; indeed I do not curse him; but I am not Christian enough to bless him. A stuttering man the other day moving away his goods, something broke by accident, which put him in a violent passion, and he stammered da-da-damn Lord North, da-da-damn Lord North, several times, to the diversion of the bye-standers; so all the evils are charged to his Lordship's account, except by Dr. —, who preaches in the — meeting; he says, it is not Lord North or South, nor English parliament nor French, but it is your sins that have brought it on you; Lord North, he says, is commissioned by the Almighty to plague us for our iniquities; and by him we may infer he is acquitted. Our ports are opened by the Congress to every part of the world except Britain, her islands, and Ireland; the merchants have raised their goods to an enormous price; many articles are very scarce indeed; but we must learn to do without them; there is quite a hue and cry about pins. Dr. Franklin, &c. is gone to treat with the Canadians.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The members of the commission appointed by the Continental Congress on February 15, 1776, to treat with the Canadians, were Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Chase, and Charles Carroll of Carrollton. The Rev-

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, April 13.<sup>1</sup>*

We are far from being dismayed at hearing that foreign mercenaries are hired to fight against us, for two reasons; first, that your Adm——n [Administration] have not prevalence enough amongst the inhabitants of Great Britain and Ireland to raise the quota of troops they intend to send over to subdue us: and secondly, because we know that the Germans not being used to salt provisions (which they must from necessity eat) will find it much more preferable for their present comfortable subsistence, as well as a prospect of future happy settlement, to join us; the number of poor half starved wretches that by this time have returned to you, will, I suppose, evince the latter part of the conjecture.

*Extract of a letter from New-York, April 15.<sup>2</sup>*

The packet now lies ready for sailing at the side of the Governor's ship, waiting for his orders, perhaps to carry the fate of Quebec. As we have no account from them can say nothing from that quarter. Our Continental Congress only wait the arrival of the Commissioners, to see if we can make up on honourable terms; if not they will declare independent, and then farewell to Great-Britain, for all which she may thank her haughty pride. We daily expect Washington with his 20,000 Yankies; *Howe* has evacuated Boston, to the great joy of all there; they took the wrong bull by the horn; one third of America is cerend John Carroll, a Catholic priest, accompanied them at the request of the Congress.

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, June 19, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> *London Evening Post*, June 4-6, 1776.

tainly lost to Great Britain without recovery. So much for fleets and armies to enforce unjust measures. We all live here like nuns shut up in a nunnery. No Society with the Town, for there is none there to visit; neither can we go in or out after a certain hour without the counter sign. It is said General Howe is gone to Halifax, the only Colony the King has in America. Since the arrival of these Yankies the men of war here are not allowed provisions or water, and they, in their turn, are driving back all boats from the Jersies, and cutting off our supplies of provisions from thence. In short, a general ruin seems to have overspread the whole face of the earth; but we trust in that arm that lead the armies of Israel through the Wilderness, for our redemption. All America seems so engaged in war that no other conversation has any place: It will from necessity teach us the wholesome lessons of frugality and oeconomy. Manufactories of flax, wool, and cotton, are carrying on in all the Colonies, that the poor may live, and the publick be obliged with their labour. We are well supplied with Dutch goods, and soon shall with French; it is impossible the men of war can watch all our vessels, though they lie at the Hook on purpose; we have so many creeks and harbours that they know nothing of, that they cannot ruin us. Our Congress have opened the Ports by a Proclamation, allowing a trade to all the world, except Great Britain and her West-India Islands. Never was a people more spirited to oppose ministerial measures than all America are. I wish the people on your side, would really see things as they are, they would be glad to sue for peace, and make the best come off they could. If it is possible send us a

few pins and needles, and Scotch thread, any body coming this way will take charge of them.

*Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, April 18.<sup>1</sup>*

Major Rogers is now at the Congress, together with the warriors and Chiefs of the different tribes of Indians; there are likewise a number of French, German, and Prussian officers, and one French Nobleman at the Camp at Cambridge; whether their business is of a political nature, or curiosity has excited their journey hither, we cannot say, but General Washington and the principal officers in the Provincial army shew them the greatest respect imaginable. Numbers of Indians from the back settlements are on their march to join the Continental army, and one of their warriors, in a short pointed speech observed to the Savages, since the Great King (the King of England) had disturbed the tranquility of the colonies, he hoped the intrepid native Indians of America would never turn heel till all the tyrant plunderers were drove out of that free country.

*The following passage is taken from an original letter received from an English gentleman at New York :<sup>2</sup> —*

Certainly the people in England are greatly deceived by a number of ministerial hirelings, who misrepresent the Provincials in the English news-papers as raw, undisciplined, and unexperienced troops. I lately saw the grand army encamped at Cambridge, which, without partiality, is composed of the finest troops in Europe, men from their infancy inured to hardships, and brought up to know the use of the

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, June 18, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



firelock; they have amongst their officers several Prussians; I have seen them exercise several field days, and you may give me credit for the assertion; on the parade in St. James's Park, I have never beheld the guards more regular in their different manoeuvres. The above troops are hardy, robust men, very zealous in the cause, and if ever they meet the British forces in the field of battle, depend on it they will dispute the contest with the most determined obstinacy.

*Extract of a letter from an Officer on board a man of war in Halifax Harbour, May 7.<sup>1</sup>*

My last was from Nantasket Road, on our leaving Boston; our voyage hither was the most disagreeable I have ever had, when I tell you we were a month from leaving the Road to our arrival in this Harbour, which is one of the finest perhaps in the whole world. The wind was for the most part against us, but the fogs that prevailed on this coast were our greatest hindrance. Sometimes we were just off the Harbour's mouth, when the fogs came on, then immediately about ship, and stand to sea, perhaps not able to see the ships length, so that we were obliged to ring the bell, and keep a loud noise, to prevent any of the ships sailing foul of us; at length we got into the Harbour, all except about four sail, who have come in since, and considering every thing, I think it is a miracle we have heard of no loss.

A great many of our troops were immediately disembarked, who have begun to repair and fortify the works, and put them in the best posture. I have not

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, June 12, 1776.

yet been ashore, on account of a hurt I received in my leg, when one of the fogs came on, by running foul of one of the guns, for it was so dark, though the middle of the day, that I could hardly see my hand before me. They tell me the fogs here last two thirds of the year. We are tolerably well off, having had fresh beef sent on board us since we arrived, though they tell me it is very scarce to what it used to be, as it has been sold here for three halfpence a pound. I do not hear whether we are to stay here long, or proceed soon to any other place, the General being very close in his affairs. The people here are glad we are come, and I assure you we are as glad as they, having been obliged to keep a good look-out, and row guard every night in Boston Harbour. I shall take every opportunity to send you, what news we have, though we know very little besides what concerns ourselves, unless by chance they bring in a price.

*Extract of a letter from an Officer of the 15th Regiment, to his Friend here, dated at the Camp near Cape Fear, North Carolina, May 17.<sup>1</sup>*

On the 7th inst. the 15th and 28th regiments landed on a Peninsula, at the mouth of the River, but the enemy not chusing to shew themselves, the General, after reconnoitring the country, reimbarked them. A few days later, the 27th and 33d regiment went 15 miles up the River, and dispossessed the Rebels of a post they had at that place called Brunswick. They took a few prisoners and had one man killed. After executing this business, they returned to the ships with a seasonable supply of twenty bullocks. On the 15th inst. the 15th, 28th, 33d, 37th, and 54th regi-

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Aug. 5-7, 1776.

ments landed, and encamped near a demolished post opposite to our shipping.<sup>1</sup> The 57th is encamped on the opposite shore,<sup>2</sup> and the 46th is still on board. Part of the Rebels are within two or three miles of us, but their strongest point, or chief dependence, is at Wilmington, about twenty miles from hence.

*Extract of a letter from a gentleman of Philadelphia, to his friend in London, dated Philadelphia, May 18, 1776.*<sup>3</sup>

MY GOOD FRIEND,

I received your favour of the 27th of December last, and have ventured to convey this in the manner you were so kind as to direct. You tell me that nothing will appease your Ministry but *unconditional submission*. Alas! Sir, such language may answer the purpose of a Bute, a Mansfield, a North, a Sandwich, and a Rigby, but it has no weight, and makes not the least impression on an American Congress, further than that of uniting them more firmly in the godlike cause they were engaged in. Did your hectoring Ministry know the preparations we are making, the happy union that subsists, and the determined spirit of all ranks of people to *die or live free*, they would be apt to adopt different language: but bullying has been the business of Ministry, and their minions, ever since the unnatural contest began. Such politicians as the noted Bacchanalian bruiser R——y,<sup>4</sup> and the no less noted *Twitcher*,<sup>5</sup> as well as many others among you, are capable of supporting the most shame-

<sup>1</sup> Fort Johnson.

<sup>2</sup> On a point called Baldhead.

<sup>3</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, July 13, 1776.

<sup>4</sup> Richard Rigby, paymaster-general of the King's forces.

<sup>5</sup> The apt application of a quotation from "The Beggar's Opera" fixed on Lord Sandwich the name of Jemmy Twitcher. Robertson, *England under the Hanoverians*, p. 231.

ful measures without remorse, and of uttering the most ridiculous language without a blush. While such men continue in power, and such dam—ble doctrines as theirs are adopted, we are determined to resist; and we hope, with the assistance of Divine Providence, to do it with such success as to secure not only liberty to ourselves, but also to your tame, and infatuated, and corrupt countrymen. The most ignorant amongst us sees to what shifts you are drove to justify your conduct. The *dignity of Great Britain*, the *supremacy of Parliament*, and such like ministerial jargon, produce nothing more than a smile of contempt. We are only surprised that while there are still some men who preside in your national Synod who are above corruption, that the promoters and supporters of such newfangled doctrines escaped being impeached of *treason against the Constitution*, which we Americans look upon as the first and most dangerous species of rebellion. At sea, it is true, at present we are not upon a footing with you, but we soon shall be. We have four fine vessels in great forwardness here; they are named the Warren, Montgonery, M'Pherson, and Hendricks,<sup>1</sup> in memory of the brave men that have fallen in support of the rights of human nature. We have already powder sufficient to serve us seven years, allowing that you could export 50,000 hirelings to be slaughtered annually. In a word, my friend, it is not in the power of Great Britain to enslave us. Howe may possibly get possession of New-York, and by way of doing *something*,

<sup>1</sup> According to Paulin (*Navy of the American Revolution*, p. 92), the four vessels built at Philadelphia under the direction of the Marine Committee were the Randolph, the Washington, the Effingham and the Delaware.



may make a bonfire of it. This will afford his master, the Minden Hero,<sup>1</sup> matter sufficient to blazon out a Gazette; but he will find himself in the same predicament that he found himself at Boston, and must soon be under the necessity of returning from whence he came. If he attempts to penetrate into the country, he will be attacked and beat. To talk of treating with him and his brigadiers, is a joke; it is ludicrous, and can only be meant to insult us. We will never submit till the bayonet is removed from our breasts to the scabbord, and your tyrannical Acts of Parliament are repealed. Believe me, Sir, these are the sentiments of all degrees of men in British America, a few tattered Scotch Highlanders excepted, who have lately emigrated, and whose ignorance, feudal notions, and attachment *to names*, keeps them servile and wholly at the beck of their Chiefs. These, with a few Episcopalians from the same country, who are to a man Jacobites, are all that favour the cause of slavery and oppression. In this Province, English, Scotch, and Irish, are equally engaged in the great cause of liberty. Indeed many of the Scotch have particularly signalized themselves in the cause of freedom. Young MacPherson fell before Quebec;<sup>2</sup> you must remember his father, who lost an arm and gained great credit last war in a privateer from this place. You must also remember Messrs. Sproat, Semple, and Milligen, merchants in Front-Street;<sup>3</sup> those gentlemen, with

<sup>1</sup> Lord George Germaine, who was Secretary of State for the Colonies at this time, had been court-martialed after the battle of Minden and adjudged unfit to serve in any military capacity.

<sup>2</sup> Captain John McPherson was aid-de-camp to General Montgomery.

<sup>3</sup> Probably David Sproat and William Semple, dry-goods merchants. It has not been possible to identify Milligen.

many others of their countrymen, have taken great pains to accomplish themselves in the military art, and have raised companies of their own countrymen of a hundred men each, who are equipped in the Scottish dress, and make a very warlike appearance. The Scotch, in the Province of Pennsylvania, act like and speak like their ancestors. They covenanted against the tyranny of a Stewart, their own countryman; and they are determined with us never to become the slaves of any Parliament or Potentate on earth. I mention this, as I see many reflections on the Scotch in the English papers. Thank God, they are here the very warmest advocates for liberty.

From what we have learned since General Washington took possession of Boston, though we have some Tories amongst us, Gage and Howe have full as many Whigs; and while your Ministry are fully determined to support the former, our Congress will not forget the latter. The treatment of Gage while at Boston to some of his officers, on a supposition *only* of their not being heartily in the present unnatural contest, must surely render his name execrable amongst you to the latest posterity. He put Lieutenant Fowler, an old officer, into close confinement, merely, it seems, on account of being a Presbyterian, and for having, at times, with some false friends, avowed himself a friend to such principles as formed and established the ever memorable and glorious Revolution, and secured the regal dignity of the British empire to the illustrious family of Hanover.

We are happy to find that the noble and patriotic *Lord Effingham* is not the only British officer, who had virtue and spirit enough to avow their principles;

and we are sorry to find that so disinterested, brave, and worthy a character as Lieutenant *Fowler*, should have suffered so much in the cause of truth and freedom. This gentleman, after being confined, brought to a Court Martial, and persecuted by G—— [Gage] and his minions, was at last superseded of his commission; and it is suspected that as his commission and sword was his fortune, that he may be left destitute of a common subsistence: for being *constitutionally loyal*, he may at this time be in some obscure corner of your degenerate island, struggling under the weighty oppressions of Ministerial vengeance, with nothing to comfort him but the rectitude of his own heart.

America has been ever grateful to Great-Britain, and we will ever be generous to our friends; we only wish to know this gentleman's situation, and in what manner we could afford him assistance, as well as others who have suffered in the cause of justice, truth, and liberty. Pray make some inquiry after this most injured gentleman, and let us know his situation. A Lieut. Trist, whose lady is a native of this city, was, we understand, also superseded of his commission, merely because he discovered, by opening a letter from Miss T—— to the Lieutenant, that she wished he had retired from the service before the present disturbances commenced, and fervently prayed for a speedy reconciliation. Mr. Hancock obligingly forwarded the letter to General Washington (as many others were) to be sent into Boston. Miss T—— happened in the letter to mention his name with respect. This was enough. G—— [Gage] swore, it seems, that she was a *Rebel*, in course her

husband the Lieutenant, was a *Whig*, and was unfit for the present *pious* war. Can such little-minded grovelling creatures as a G—— and I believe a H—— [Howe] is little better, ever expect to succeed in any thing? God forbid! As for business, it is not now so much as thought of amongst us. To toss a firelock with grace and dexterity employs all our time, and is our greatest ambition; and I think we have made such progress by the assistance of the honest Whigs (some of whom have been compelled, and others have voluntarily left the Ministerial army) who have from time to time joined us, as to be on a footing in point of discipline with Howe and his Buccaniers. The small ballance that remains unsettled, shall be remitted when a safe opportunity offers; so, Sir, be assured, while we are striving to be *free*, we will not forget to be *honest*.

We know the language of Ministerial sycophants is, that *independence* has been always our aim. We deny it. Our independence will continue no longer than your obstinacy and cruelty. Can you blame us for this? We ask, we wish for no more than the privileges of British subjects, and we will have that, or bid you an everlasting adieu. You rob us of our birth-rights, you destroy our charters, you burn our towns and villages, you murder our wives and children, you block up our trade, and you plunder us of our property, and for remonstrating against such cruelty, we are deemed Rebels.

Believe me, my good Sir, if we are Rebels (we value not the appellation your Parliament gives us) we are such Rebels, as England never before had to cope with. Though a *Charles Stuart* and a *Simon Frazier*,



with a few undisciplined highlanders, shook your credit, beat your troops in two pitched battles, and penetrated so far as to alarm your capital with a direct intention to dethrone the Grandfather of your present misled Monarch, and subjugate Englishmen once more to hereditary tyranny; yet, Sir, such men, with all the dregs and refuse of your country that accompanies them, cannot even dismay us. Is it to be supposed that 50,000 men, composed of German mercenaries, Scotch jacobites, Irish papists, and the produce of your gaols, are to conquer America? are to subjugate three millions of free people, whose motto is "DEATH OR LIBERTY," many of whom are such Enthusiasts, as to have those words painted on their hats, caps, and jackets with their own blood, who are fighting in the cause of justice, with heaven on their side, and who have above 100,000 men ready to take the field, and was there a necessity, could arm a million? But we wish not to either *bully* or *push*, and this I'm afraid, to men who know not America, may bear the face of fiction. Such men I could wish to refer to you, as you must be sensible from your knowledge of this country, that I don't exaggerate.

The drum beats to arms, I must therefore conclude with wishing you better health, your King better Ministers, and your country a better P——t [Parliament]. How does our old friend W——? If I mistake not, he has too beneficent a heart, and too much good sense, to approve of the present measures. My best wishes attend him. I am, with unaltered regard, my good friend, Yours, &c.

R. B.

*To W. L. Merchant, London.*

*Extract of a private letter from a Boston gentleman, at Halifax, to his friend in London, dated May 23.<sup>1</sup>*

This town becomes every day more and more agreeable to us. Scarce a day passes without the arrival of some ship from England, Ireland, or the West Indies. The troops are all getting ready to embark on an expedition, and the whole embarkation will be completed by the 28th of this month; the place of destination is a secret, but Long Island or New York are generally talked of as the place of rendezvous.

We have the news of the defeat of the Provincials at Quebec, by a vessel dispatched by Gov. Tryon express to this place, and it gave us great spirits to find it accomplished without bloodshed.

I have had some talk with the people of this New-York vessel, and, according to their account, two-thirds of the inhabitants of Long Island are staunch friends to government, and the New Yorkers will be very ready to join the King's forces on their first landing. There is a military gentleman come with them, who has the names of 500 principal inhabitants of New York, signed to an agreement for supporting and assisting him in raising men in that province for government, and he comes here for General Howe's giving him the proper authority for that purpose. From all these accounts we entertain the most pleasing hopes that it will not be long before matters are amicably settled.

*Extract of a letter from Boston, May 28.<sup>2</sup>*

In my last I wrote you that my affairs required me

<sup>1</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, June 29, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, July 5, 1776.

to leave this place with the King's troops. I had indeed too many effects to move, and in a vessel where I must of necessity be cribbed for want of room. The Provincials, to do them justice, have behaved very orderly, and more like soldiers than I could have expected from what I was made to believe. They pay for every thing they purchase, and have more cash than I thought for. I take care to secure what comes into my hands of it, and get rid of the paper currency as well as I can. The troops are sadly in want of cloathing, and, I suppose must look like the Rebels in 1745, even many of their officers cut but a poor figure on that account. I have almost emptied my store, and assure you I shall quit the moment I have cleared it this disagreeable country, though now we have provisions as remarkably cheap, as before they were dear. We hear here that the privateers of the Congress have taken several ships, and declared them good prizes. Two indeed have been brought in here, the crews of which were suffered to go where they pleased, but the masters and mates were ordered not to leave Boston without a pass. I suppose this is a trick to get the seamen to enter into the Provincial service. I don't believe we have above 4000 troops here now, for the General has sent great reinforcements to New York, expecting a visit there from Howe. I am inclined to think, from what I can learn, that there is a misunderstanding between Washington and the Congress; they will not match him as an officer, I believe, in the whole continent, and his prudent regulations here confirm what I say. I smuggle this on board Captain Furse, who sails tomorrow or next day I believe, and be assured I shall in a few

weeks ship myself for Old England, or, if I cannot do that, for the West Indes, and so for Bristol. I cannot expect to hear from you.

*Extract of a letter from an Officer at Halifax, to his friend in Edinburg, June 8.*<sup>1</sup>

We have this instant received orders, that the fleet with the troops get under weigh tomorrow at day break. The rendez vous, in case of separation, is to be Sandy Hook, about thirty miles below New York, so you may guess where we are going. One transport of Lord John Murray's regiment is arrived; and the rest of the Highlanders from the Clyde are near at hand. We have been unlucky in the loss of our ordnance ship, one was taken the other day by the rebels, with no less than fifteen hundred whole barrels of powder, two thousand stands of arms, and two thousand cloathing. A brave Lieutenant, Harris, and several seamen, were killed in attempting to cut her out of King-road, a little below Boston.<sup>2</sup>

*Extract of a letter from Virginia, June 28.*<sup>1</sup>

Yesterday marched from this place a Regiment of fine young men for New-York; some of them are persons of property. They were raised at the instigation of Thomas Maugridge, Esq; their regimentals are blue, faced with red. Ourran, an Indian Warrior, who at the same time with several tribes of Indians marched with the above Regiment, in a short, but

<sup>1</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, July 20, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> This was probably the ship *Hope*, which was captured by Captain Mugford in the schooner *Franklin* and which ran ashore on Pulling Point, May 17, 1776.

<sup>3</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Sept. 2-4, 1776.



pointed speech, told the savages, they were ordained by nature to be and were free: That the Great King wanted to enslave them; but if they trusted in the King of all Kings, they would in a short time be superior to the Great King and his evil Counsellors.

*Extract of a Letter from an Officer of the 57th Regiment, to his Friend at Edinburgh, dated Camp at Long Island, South Carolina, July 6, 1776.*<sup>1</sup>

After nine weeks passage we arrived at Cape Fear, N. Carolina, beginning of May; and after several excursions up the country, where we did not meet with a single soul, we staid till the whole fleet arrived, and about a month ago, set sail for this place. After anchoring within the bar of Charlestown, the General sent a boat to Sullivan's Island, on purpose to read his Majesty's Proclamation to the rebels, upon which Island their chief force is; they have a great many guns mounted, some of them 42 pounders; two of the rascals fired at the boat, upon which it returned.

Next morning, four men in a boat put off from the island, and came on board one of the ships of war; one of the people, well dressed in blue, faced with red, made many apologies for firing at the boat last night, imputing it to the ignorance of the centinals.<sup>2</sup> [Here follows a sketch of the action before Sullivan's Island, which has nothing new but this: That the rebels hanged up over one of their batteries, in time of the action, a sailor who had deserted from one of the transports.]<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, Sept. 2, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> Captain Francis Huger was sent by Colonel William Moultrie with a letter of explanation.

<sup>3</sup> Inserted by the editor of the newspaper.

*Extract of a letter from a Gentleman at Sandyhook, near New York, to his Friend in London, dated July 6, 1776.*<sup>1</sup>

We left Halifax the 10th, and arrived at Sandyhook the 29th of June, and on the evening of the 1st of July the army took possession of Staten Island without opposition, and have fortified it in such places as to have the entire command of the whole island. The poor Tories, as the King's loyal subjects are called, in New York, are suffering the most cruel persecutions; some have been obliged to ride Skimmington on a rail, till they died; <sup>2</sup> one was lately executed; <sup>3</sup> others are confined in gaol, in irons. Some have been lucky enough to escape, and have sought an asylum among us; others have fled to avoid being impressed, they being now reduced to the necessity of drafting their men, in consequence of a Resolve that every fourth man shall serve this campaign. Some of their Rifle-men have joined our army, and many more are watching a convenient opportunity to come over. The progress our Army is making in Canada has damped their spirits greatly, which, with the circumstances of the backwardness of their Soldiers, and the daily desertions from them, together with the great force we shall muster upon Lord Howe's arrival, makes me hope we shall see an end of the Rebellion this year.

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Aug. 14-16, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Jones, a loyalist, in his *History of New York during the Revolution*, says nothing about any one having died as the result of this treatment.

<sup>3</sup> This probably refers to the execution of Thomas Hickey, who was implicated in the plot to betray Washington. See letter from New York, July 7, 1776, and from Staten Island, July 9, pp. 328, 342.

*Extract of a letter from an Officer under General Clinton,  
dated July 6.<sup>1</sup>*

I suppose ere this you have been acquainted of our unsuccessful attempt at Sullivan's Island. I assure you the miscarriage has greatly disheartened our troops; and in consequence of the day's work, a great coolness subsists between the General and the Admiral, each blaming the other for the failure of the British arms. We reserve our hopes of better fortune till we have joined General Howe, which we are endeavouring immediately to do. Our want of provisions is generally known, notwithstanding the caution that is used to conceal it. Should we prove successful in our next attempt, which is intended either against New-York or Philadelphia, it will even then be dangerous to penetrate into the provinces, as we have information that the Provincials have prepared mines for us at several places in the inland provinces. This account is confirmed by some deserters, but they vary so much in their answers, that we have reason to believe they are sent purposely to deceive us with respect to the situation of those destructive engines. If there are any such preparations against us, the deserters cannot be ignorant of it: they, however, affect to be totally unacquainted with the design, so that it is impossible to be aware of the danger, in case a progress into the provinces is determined on. But before this can be effected, we have a capital conquest to make of New-York or Philadelphia, which will cost us many lives.

The Provincials have a great many French and Prussian engineers in their army, and therefore we are

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, Sept. 5, 1776.

inclined to fear the account of their operations. — Whether this is true or false, we shall act with caution, and endeavour to guard against the secret machinations of such subtle and powerful enemies as those with whom we are contending.

The idea of reconciliation is now chimerical. The Americans act like men desperate and careless of the preservation of their lives. I *must* acknowledge their bravery, though I disapprove of their opposition. They are in no want of provisions; and with stores and arms they are plentifully supplied by the French and Dutch.

Major Rogers commands a powerful force of Indians: these savages strike great terror with their yellings, and dismay their enemies before they engage. The Major's vicissitudes of fortune would furnish entertainment, were they thrown into a pamphlet, which I am told is shortly intended by a particular friend of the Major's, who was his constant companion in England, and who has taken notes of the most remarkable passages of this great man's life. The Indians consider him as their God, and the Congress are constantly loading him with honours; <sup>1</sup> it is a pity he was so neglected by Government, to whom he might have proved a material acquisition.

<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, Washington was at this time highly suspicious of Major Rogers and had his movements carefully watched. These suspicions were later justified when Major Rogers openly joined the British forces before New York.



*Extract of a Letter received by Capt. L—— from his son and conveyed by the Mercury packet to Falmouth, dated from on board his Majesty's sloop Swan, Sandy Hook, New York, July 7, 1776.*<sup>1</sup>

I send you this by the Mercury packet, bound for Falmouth, which I hope will be the last, until I shall have the happy enjoyment of seeing you myself, which may be about the middle of September; it depends upon the arrival of Lord Howe and the fleet which we expect hourly; we should have been sent to England from Halifax, but being acquainted with the coast about this place, the Admiral detained us to assist in convoying the fleet to the place above-mentioned, where we have arrived all safe and well, and the troops landed on Staten Island without the least opposition; three hundred friends joined the troops immediately; no attack I believe will be made until the grand army arrives; our station at present is off Sandy-Hook light-house, which was attacked about four days before we arrived, by five hundred rebels, with two brass field-pieces, six pounders, double fortified, but were driven off by a sergeant and corporal of the 57th regiment, with five of Governor Tryon's men; they killed 14 of the rebels, one of whom we hear is a major; we expect it will be attacked again very soon, but we are well prepared for them. The friends of Government are making their escape, as fast as possible; we have sent up to the Admiral one hundred within these few days, and many thousands we find, by the information of these people, will join the troops as soon as they can get to them, but at present they are not able, for the rebels disarmed them some time

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, Aug. 20-22, 1776.



FROM THE UNIVERSAL MAGAZINE, 1777



ago, so that they are not able to defend themselves against the villains who have eaten the poor farmers out of house and home; the water side is guarded by riflemen, to prevent their getting off. This rebellion will not last long, when once we begin, for the friends of government are very numerous. I have nothing particular to mention, only that my poor school-fellow, John Harding, was drowned about six weeks ago, in a boat getting off cattle, and three of the men; my brother I shall not be able to see, I am afraid, before we sail, but hear that he is well, by one of my old acquaintances.

N. B. Captain Brothie, in the Eleanor, is well, he is up at the watering place with the troops.

*Extract of a letter from New-York, July 7.<sup>1</sup>*

I enclose this to you under cover. A friend promises to get it on board the frigate that is to sail immediately. The change in this place from what you knew it is dreadful. The sound of the lute is no more, and the harp is hung up in sorrow. The drum and the trumpet have taken their place. Batteries of 120 cannon defend the approach to the town and the passage of North River. Our redoubts, both here and on Long Island are strong. Every important post is occupied, and our army numerous and resolved.

In this situation we have been some time waiting for the attack under General Howe. We made no doubt from the menaces thrown out, that he would attack us immediately on his arrival; but instead of that, he has landed with his whole army, on Staten Island, which you know is a miserable low place, of

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Aug. 14, 1776.



so little importance in any respect whatsoever, that we did not think it worth fortifying.

We were sufficiently aware that Governor Tryon and the Tories here had acquainted him with our situation and strength; and it is only from putting all things together that we are able to account for his having made so sudden a voyage hither, apparently to attack us, and yet not attempting it when he arrived. The solution of the difficulty seems to be this:

A few weeks since some hints were given to General Washington, who is universally beloved, *to take care of himself*. This produced observation and vigilance, which soon intercepted a letter, by which they were led to seize suddenly upon the Mayor and other Tories here, from whose papers a plot was discovered, so deep and desperate as you would hardly imagine could exist in this new world. The plot was to seize General Washington and other leading men; to spike up the cannon in the night as soon as the fleet appeared, and thus render the landing of the enemy easy, and their victory sure. This was to have been executed the night after the fleet arrived. The scheme was concerted with the Governor, and by him communicated to General Howe, who, we now suppose, left Halifax in expectation of its being accomplished.

The Mayor has been publicly tried for this, was condemned, and sentenced, but is still in prison, with some other conspirators.

This plot is the second edition of that which was executed in North-Carolina, by men of the same principles. It has given us such a horrible idea of the

Scots and Tories among us, that for the future they will not meet with very different treatment from what they have hitherto experienced. We suppose General Howe waits for reinforcements before he will venture to attack us. Whenever he does, the contest will be bloody. The event is in the arbitration of Heaven. You may imagine the infinite anxiety with which we expect it. A Colonel Campbell, with all his Officers, and 700 men, are made prisoners, after a short engagement, by some of our privateers.<sup>1</sup> A strong detachment is sent towards Canada, to reinforce our army there, which has received a check, with the loss of the brave General Thompson.

*Copy of a Letter received by the Mercury Packet, dated  
New-York, July 7, 1776.<sup>2</sup>*

By this conveyance you will be advised of the safe landing of the army on Staten Island; which place is not only very fertile, but is absolutely the key of this province; as nothing can come in or go out without the Admiral's leave; besides which, this great city, and Amboy, in New Jersey, can in an hour be bombarded, as they are not above six miles distant from Staten Island; and the North River being navigated 160 miles for ships of burthen, the General may send what forces he pleases to Albany, in three days time, when they will not be above ninety miles distant from General Carlton; a junction therefore can speedily be effected, then there will be a total separa-

<sup>1</sup> Several transports that were carrying Scotch Highlanders to the assistance of the British army were captured by American privateers early in June. They did not know of the evacuation of Boston until they reached the entrance to the harbor.

<sup>2</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, Aug. 17, 1776.

tion of the four New-England colonies from all the other. The southern ones will be an easy conquest.

*Letter from an Officer in the Army, dated Camp on Long Island, about two leagues from the Bar of Charles Town, South Carolina, July 7.<sup>1</sup>*

On the 9th of June we got over the Bar, and came to an anchor in the Road. Sullivan's Island forms one side of the channel leading to Charles Town; this the Rebels had strongly fortified, and it was therefore to be the first object of our attack. The Bristol and Experiment, two 50 gun ships, were ordered to be lightened, by taking out their guns, that they might pass over the Bar, to silence their batteries. Before this could be compleated, and the ships refitted again, it was the 28th. On that day the Experiment and Bristol, the Soleboy and Active frigates, with a bomb vessel, began the engagement, about eleven o'clock in the morning, and a most severe cannonade was kept up on both sides till eight in the evening, by which time it was quite dark. The Rebels for the last hour or two only fired from two cannon. The men of war are very much shattered, and have lost near 200 men.

The great loss the fleet sustained is said to be chiefly owing to the timidity of the Pilots, who would not carry the ships nearer to the batteries than 900 yards.

In the period between the 9th and 28th the Troops were landed on this Island, to second the attack of the shipping, by landing in boats, if possible, on the North End of Sullivan's Island, which is separated

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Aug. 26-28, 1776.

from this Island by a narrow strait only; and never were troops more desirous to have supported the operations of the Navy than ours appeared to be; but from what we have since learnt, it is very fortunate the prudence of our commander induced him to forego this attempt. Our first landing was to have consisted of the Grenadiers, Light Infantry, and the 15th Regiment, amounting in all to about 700 men; we had not boats for more; and from what can be collected, the Rebels on the Island were 2000 strong, and covered up to their chins in entrenchments.

This day (the 28th) and night the troops were kept under arms; but on the morning of the 29th, finding the ships had hauled off in the night, all our operations ceased.

The Acteon, Sphinx, and Syren frigates, were intended to pass the Island, and cut off the retreat of the Rebels: But unfortunately they fell foul of each other, and ran aground; and on the morning of the 29th the Acteon remaining aground, she was burnt.

We are preparing to embark to join the grand Army near New-York.

*Extract of a letter from an Officer on board his Majesty's ship, the Bristol, near Charles Town, South Carolina, dated July 7, 1776.*<sup>1</sup>

I have the pleasure to tell you, that I am now much better than I was on the 28th of June; that day I was in a shocking condition, in an engagement with the Rebels. I shall now send you a true account, just as it was. We fell down in company with the Experiment, of fifty guns, the Solebay and Active frigates,

<sup>1</sup> *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, Aug. 26-28, 1776.



of twenty-eight guns each. As soon as we brought up to Sullivan's Fort leading up to Charles Town, we then began to fire, which continued for nine hours and an half; I must say a very smart engagement. They killed us near fifty men, and dangerously wounded more, to the amount of fifty and upwards. The Experiment lost about thirty killed, and forty and upwards wounded. The Active had only one killed (the Lieutenant) and few wounded. The Solebay had three killed and few wounded. Our worthy Capt. Morris was killed by my side, and eight Marines and Sailors. The Captain of the Experiment had his arm shot off, but is in a fair way of recovery. The Commodore, Sir Peter Parker, who I am with, is wounded; myself also in my left leg, but it is in a fair way of recovery without an amputation. Had the army, which was but four miles from us, and was to have joined us, come in due time to our assistance, we might have taken Charles Town, as we silenced the Fort for an hour and an half. We are in a shattered condition, and are getting up jury masts to go to Halifax to repair, which will take up some time, being shot through and through. During the action no slaughter-house could present so bad a sight with blood and entrails lying about, as our ship! I suppose you will see a narrative of the action in the News Papers as soon as you have this. General Lee is at Charles Town; and the army under Generals Clinton and Cornwallis is gone to the Northward, as nothing can be done here, the weather being so extremely hot. Our fleet is in a bad condition with the scurvy.

*An extract of a letter from a Captain of the 37th regiment, dated head quarters, Long Island, in South Carolina, 8th July,<sup>1</sup> after mentioning the unsuccessful operation of the fleet, adds:*

That the army was in the mean time waiting the result of the operations of the fleet, in order to have landed on the opposite side of the island to that which they attacked; but as little impression was made on the battery, and a very superior force deeply entrenched, besides a battery of four guns, to oppose our landing, which could only have been by 600 men at a time, very fortunately for us it was not attempted, for in the opinion of all present, from what we have since learned, the first embarkations must have fallen a sacrifice.

As nothing therefore is likely to be now done here, both on account of the rebels' force, (for they have two strong batteries, besides the island between us and the town, one of them of 60 guns) and the heat of the weather now is almost become intolerable, the fleet is watering, and as soon as that is compleated, the troops will re-embark and proceed to the northward, in order to join the grand army under Gen. Howe.

The loss the rebels sustained on the 28th, which we have only learnt from a deserter which came over to us a few days ago, is only 11 killed and 50 wounded.

The troops are remarkably healthy notwithstanding their being obliged to live so long on salt provisions, and the fatigue they have undergone since they landed on this island. I have not myself had my clothes off, or lain in a bed these three weeks past.

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, Sept. 2, 1776.

*Extract of a letter received by way of Holland, from an officer of Frazer's Highlanders, who was taken with 170 of that regiment, in a transport bound to Halifax.*<sup>1</sup>

I suppose, ere this, you will have heard of our misfortune in being taken by an American privateer. This, as the chance of war, we could easily have borne; but the treatment we have received since our landing was almost too hard for men of spirit to put up with. As it was thought improper for us to remain at a seaport, we were ordered sixty miles up the country, there to be separated and put under guard of the country militia; accordingly we sat out, but on our journey no slaves were ever served as we were; through every village, town, and hamlet that we passed, the women and children, and indeed some men among them, came out and loaded us with the most rascally epithets, calling us "rascally cut-throat dogs, murtherers, blood hounds, &c. &c." But what vexed me most was their continual slandering of our country (Scotland), on which they threw the most infamous invectives; to this abuse they added showers of dirt and filth, with now and then a stone. We complained to those who had us in charge, but it was needless; for though they saw, and said they were sorry for the ill treatment we had received, it was not in their power to remedy it; for that if they took any measures to prevent it, even they themselves would not escape full as bad, if not worse usage than we had experienced, and also be considered as traitors to their country for only defending and protecting us from the resentment of the populace; we therefore were obliged to submit to what they were pleased to say and do;

<sup>1</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, Sept. 7, 1776.

and were happy, I assure you, when we arrived at the post where we were destined to remain as prisoners. I have applied, with the rest of the officers, to the Congress for our discharge on parole, and am in hopes of succeeding, when I shall fully inform you of particulars. I send this by a Dutch ship bound to Amsterdam.

*A letter from New York, dated July 8,<sup>1</sup> says,*

Near twenty flat-bottomed boats are just finished at this place. General Putnam was greatly disappointed that General Howe did not land here with his troops; if he had, they must have been either taken prisoners, or else cut off. In the Provincial camp there are several foreign officers, amongst whom are some extraordinary engineers. It will certainly be out of the power of the ministerial army to make any progress this season; and were their forces doubled, the Americans are so strongly entrenched and fortified with a number of batteries, and a very formidable army of well-disciplined troops, exclusive of the Indians, who are very numerous in the woods, that it would be madness for any man to think of landing his army here to be slaughtered. — Several entrenchments are throwing up, some miles up the country, in case the regulars, by any stratagem, should attempt to come round the Provincials; and, by that means, bring them between two fires.

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, Aug. 13-15, 1776.



*Extract of a Letter from Staten Island, to a Gentleman in  
Liverpool, dated July 9.<sup>1</sup>*

We took possession of this island three or four days since, without firing a shot; the rebels immediately quitted it, or rather before we landed; we only wait for the arrival of Lord Howe, to proceed to attack the rebels. Happily both the army and fleet join hand in hand, and no forces were ever better inclined to attack them. There are a few of the rebels come in, but by all accounts numbers will join us, if they had the opportunity. Yesterday we had an account that Gen. Burgoyne is at Fort Edward with a large army of Canadians, Indians, and regulars.<sup>2</sup> We have plenty of fresh provisions.

*Extract of a letter from a Gentleman to his Friend in London,  
July 9.*

*Introductory note*

To the PRINTER of the GAZETTE,<sup>3</sup>

INCLOSED you receive a more minute account of our late disgraceful defeat at Sullivan's Island, than any hitherto published: if the Ministers of State will descend to mutilating and keeping back any accounts they receive, the friends of the people can only supply such want of information, with the utmost speed in their power; you may depend, however, upon its authenticity, which may make some amends for the lateness of its publication.

*An OLD ENGLISH MERCHANT.*

<sup>1</sup> *London Chronicle*, Aug. 17-20, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> General Burgoyne stopped his pursuit of the retreating colonial army at St. Johns. Fisher, *Struggle for American Independence*, I, 545.

<sup>3</sup> *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, Sept. 14, 1776.

*Dear Sir,*

The letter which I had the pleasure of writing you during my stay at Cape Fear, I hope, came safe to hand; I wish it, because I wrote so very particular. We left that place on the 27th of May, and anchored the same evening off the bar. The camp was struck at the same time, and the troops embarked the same evening on board the transports. All our motions were so languid and so innervate, that it was the 9th of June before the Bristol and Pigot passed the bar of Charlestown; the Bristol in passing struck, which alarmed us all exceedingly, but as it wanted two hours of high water, she soon floated again. The Prince of Piedmont, a victualling ship, was totally lost on the north-breakers of the bar: General Clinton and Lord Cornwallis were both on board when she struck; but the weather was very fine, they were not in the least danger. By our delays we gave the people every opportunity they could have wished for to extend their lines, &c. they were not idle, every hour gave us astonishing proofs of their industry. As we anchored at one league distance from Sullivan's Island, we could see all that was going on with the help of our glasses. The fort on this island is exceedingly strong, (or rather the battery) it is built of palm trees and earth, and on it are mounted 18 of the lower deck guns of the Foudroyant; I never could distinguish more than seventeen, others imagined they could see nineteen, however, that is immaterial.

The signal for attacking was made by Sir Peter on the 27th of June, but the wind coming suddenly from the northward, the ships were obliged again to anchor. The troops have been encamped on Long Is-

land since the 15th, and it was intended that Gen. Clinton should pass the Neck that divides Long Island from Sullivan's Island, and attack by land while Sir Peter attacked by sea. Gen. Lee had made such a disposition of masked batteries, troops, &c. that it is the opinion of all the officers of the army, that if our troops had attacked, they must have been cut off: but this assertion does not satisfy the navy, for they certainly expected great assistance from the army. Excuse this necessary digression. — On the morning of the 28th the wind proved favourable; it was a fine day, but sultry; the Thunder Bomb began the attack at half past eleven, by throwing shells while the ships were advancing; the ships that advanced to attack the battery were the Bristol and Experiment, two 50 gun ships, the Active, Solebay, Actaeon, and Syren of 28 guns, the Sphynx of 20, and the Friendship, an armed ship of 28 guns. With this force what might not have been expected? Unfortunately the bomb was placed at such a distance, that she was not of the least service. This Col. James, the principal engineer, perceived; to remedy which inconvenience, an additional quantity of powder was added to each mortar; the consequence was the breaking down of the beds, and totally disabling her for the rest of the day. The Bristol and Experiment have suffered incredibly: the former very early had the spring of her cable shot away, of course she lay end on to the battery, and was raked for and aft; she lost upwards of 100 men killed and wounded. Capt. Morris, who commanded her, lost his arm; the worthy man died a week after on board the Pigot. Perhaps an instance of such slaughter cannot be produced; twice the quarter-deck was

cleared of every person except Sir Peter, and he was slightly wounded; she had nine thirty-two pounders in her main mast, which is so much damaged, as to be obliged to be shortened; the mizen had seven thirty-two pounders, and was obliged, being much shattered, to be entirely cut away. It is impossible to pretend to describe what our shipping have suffered. Captain Scott of the Experiment, lost his right arm, and the ship suffered exceedingly; she had much the same number killed and wounded as the Bristol. Our situation was rendered very disagreeable by the Actaeon, Syren, and Sphynx, running foul of each other, and getting on shore on the middle ground. The Sphynx disengaged herself by cutting away her bowsprit; and as it was not yet flood tide, the Sphynx and Syren fortunately warped off. The Actaeon was burnt next morning by Capt. Atkins, to prevent her falling into the hands of the Provincials, as fine a new frigate as I ever saw. Our ships, after lying nine hours before the battery, were obliged to retire with great loss. The Provincials reserved their fire until the shipping were advanced within point blank shot; their artillery was well served it is said, under the command of Mr. Masson and De Brahem; it was slow, but decisive indeed; they were very cool, and took great care not to fire except their guns were exceedingly well directed: but there was a time when the battery appeared to be silenced for more than an hour; the navy say, had the troops been ready to land at this time they could have taken possession; how that is, I will not pretend to say; I will rather suppose it, but the fire became exceedingly severe when it was renewed again, and did amazing execution, after the



battery had been supposed to have been silenced. This will not be believed when it is first reported in England. I can scarcely believe what I myself saw on that day, a day to me one of the most distressing of my life. The navy, on this occasion, have behaved with their usual coolness and intrepidity; one would have imagined that no battery could have resisted their incessant fire.

I wish most heartily to be in England, for really, after the action of the 28th, I have very little reason to expect to see my family; what with gales of wind, heat, thunder and lightning, one might, with some degree of justice, conclude this to be the devil's own climate. Though surrounded by water, and having all the advantage of the sea air, the thermometer has seldom been lower, since I have been here, than  $76^{\circ}$ , before evening it generally rises to  $84^{\circ}$ ; I have never known it  $90^{\circ}$ , except on the 17th of June, after one of the most violent thunder storms I ever saw. This evening we have had heated gusts of wind, like the air that proceeds from the furnace, from N. N. E. upon exposing the thermometer upon the poop of the ship on this evening, the mercury rose to  $90^{\circ}$  from  $80^{\circ}$  instantly; this was at eight o'clock in the evening, after the thunder storm had entirely ceased. It reminded me of the Samiel, as related by Eastern travellers; I beg leave to mention to you, that the wind, during this surprizing storm, was exceedingly variable, scarcely remaining a moment at one point of the compass; but if I may be allowed the expression, it blew violently from each. This morning exhibited to me a scene, the most grand, the most awful I have ever beheld, the heavens appeared encircled like a

garland by the lightning, and from each cloud streams of fire seemed to fall perpendicularly to the earth. I sat perfectly easy, and therefore enjoyed this scene with pleasure, though it was truly horrid. The scurvy begins to make havock among our little fleet and army; it is a strange disorder; I wish it was better understood. We are to sail to the northward in a few days.

*Extract of a letter from an officer in the 35th regiment,  
at Staten Island, July 9.<sup>1</sup>*

On the 4th inst. we landed on this island and are in very comfortable cantonments amongst a loyal and liberal people, who produce us in plenty, and in agreeable variety, all the necessaries of life; most of which we had long been deprived of, during our late service in the eastern provinces. Our army consisted of six thousand one hundred and fifty-five effectives, on our embarkation at Halifax; they are now all safe landed here, and our headquarters are at your late old friend Will Hicks's mansion-house.

We cannot guess at the first operations of our General, who waits impatiently for the 7 regiments with Mr. Clinton, and for the European troops. From the present prospects we are in hopes of being joined by great numbers of the Provincials, many of whom are become highly dissatisfied, from the late declaration of independence, published by the Congress.

The army of Mr. Washington has been indefatigable in constructing redoubts, throwing up entrenchments, and otherwise strengthening posts, already by nature, very advantageous and defensible; particu-

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, Aug. 16, 1776.

larly at Fort George, near Trinity-Church; on the eminence at Mr. Harrison's brew-house, at Kings-bridge; from Crown Point, at Carlaer's-hook, through the estate of our good friend Mr. De Lancey of the Bowery down to the North river; making the most of Mr. Nicholas Bayard's-hill, at Mr. Cruger's wharf, and several other places within the city; on Long Island, where they have 5000 men, from the Wallobott road down to Red-hook; on Governor's Island, and also at Powle's [Paulus]-hook. The accounts given of the numbers of the whole army upon the island of New-York vary very much; some pronounce them 12, 14, and others from 24 to 30,000 men; but we well know their numbers were very much exaggerated when intrenched before Boston.

Mr. Washington's headquarters were lately removed to the city-hall, upon the discovery of a design to seize and deliver his person to Governor Tryon; for which a drummer, who had deserted from the Royal Welch Fusiliers, was apprehended and hanged. A pardon and rewards were repeatedly offered to this young lad (not exceeding 18 years of age) if he would impeach his associates in the enterprize; but he, with a glorious disdain, continued inflexibly secret, and died incomparably resolute.<sup>1</sup> The Provincial Convention of New-York have tried, and inexorably sentenced the Mayor of their city to death, for holding a correspondence with Governor Tryon, and who should this prove to be but the facetious David Matthews with whom we dined, and passed a most convivial

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Hickey, one of Washington's guard, was tried and convicted of mutiny and sedition. He was the only person who was put to death as a result of the plot.

day, just before our embarkation for Martinico in 1761: should the sentence be executed, many shocking events of the kind will follow. On our landing we found Colonel De Lancey, Mr. Apthorpe, Mr. Bayard, Mr. Cortlands Skinner of Jersey, Mr. Kempe of New-York, Mr. Barrow, Paymaster of his Majesty's forces,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Thomas William Moore, &c. &c. The former of these gentlemen had been employed, at an advanced age, and in an infirm state of health, upon the most laborious work in the Provincial entrenchments; he proves, from his intimate acquaintance with the dispositions of the inhabitants, and his accurate knowledge of the country, a valuable acquisition to our excellent General. Colonel William Bayard, has escaped, and is secreted among his numerous tenants in Orange county; but our old friends and countrymen Hugh and Alexander Wallace, together with those two cheerful Englishmen Bache and Sherbrook,<sup>2</sup> after having got over to Long Island, have not yet been able to reach our camp. Poor Charles Evers<sup>3</sup> has been long missing; he fled into the woods, and never since been heard of. The Provincials have driven most of the cattle from Long Island to the Island of New York; they were employed in carrying off all that existed in Staten Island, but luckily were prevented by the critical arrival of our troops.

The New York papers tell us, that the dull, verbose Donald Campbell, who had long prevailed at the head of the New-York mobs, insulting and torturing the friends of Government, has been tried and dismissed

<sup>1</sup> Oliver Delancy, Charles Ward Apthorpe, probably Robert Bayard, John Tabor Kempe, John Barrow.

<sup>2</sup> Theophylact Bache and Miles Sherbrook.

<sup>3</sup> Charles McEvers.



the Provincial service for his two late alert retreats in the province of Quebec. His Majesty's half-pay list I find has been lately exonerated of this caitiff. We are just now informed that the Lady and family of Sir John Johnson have been taken prisoners by the splendid and hitherto invincible General Schuyler, by way of hostages, for Sir John is at the head of a number of the Six Indian nations, and on his way to facilitate the progress of the British troops from Canada to Albany, &c. — So much, my dear fellow soldier, for narrative, my next may produce a detail of a more active kind.

The troops in these cantonments have just such an appearance as those dispatched by Sir Jeffery<sup>1</sup> against Martinico and Havannah; there is not an invalid nor a single noneffective in our army; we expect orders to land the army beyond King's-bridge, and make our approach to the city on the rear of the Island; in which case Mr. Washington must present his front to us in the fair field, or submit to an alternative which, in its event, will put an end to this hurlyburly touching Independence.

*Extract of a Letter from an Officer under General Howe,  
dated Staten Island, July 10, 1776.*<sup>2</sup>

According to the latest and best accounts the Provincial army is not so numerous as we have been taught to believe, and the strong battery (as they call it) upon Long Island is fortified with only a parcel of unwieldy cannon from Ticonderago, which are chiefly unfit for service. Our only fear is, that the Rebels will

<sup>1</sup> Sir Jeffrey Amherst.

<sup>2</sup> *London Chronicle*, Aug. 20-22, 1776.

not chuse to hazard a general action, and our suspicion on this head is the stronger, as we are told by deserters, that they have intrenchments, ambuscades, mines, and forts, for a considerable way into the country. If this is really the case, and they are determined to act upon the defensive only, and to fire their cities and habitations upon the sea coast, when we are on the point of possessing them, our work will never be done; our lives, on the contrary, will be in perpetual danger from the innumerable snares that are laid for them.

We have now a very good supply of salt provisions, a great quantity of rum, an immense quantity of ammunition of all kinds, and, what is best of all, the very people who we suspected would oppose us, are coming over to us in great numbers. So far from dreading an abridgment of their liberties, and a military government, according to the predictions of their leaders, they seem to court our friendship, and to rely upon our promise and integrity; and it is the wish of every one of us, that such a disposition may be encouraged, and that they may never have reason to repent of it. To conclude, Lord Howe is hourly expected, and that he may bring an olive-branch instead of the sword, and prevent the effusion of human blood, is the hearty wish of, yours, &c.

*Copy of a letter from an officer of the 27th Regiment, under General Howe, to his friend in London, dated July 20, at Perth Amboy.*<sup>1</sup>

In my last, of the 10th instant, I mentioned to you our arrival at Sandy-Hook, and landing on Staten

<sup>1</sup> *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Aug. 21, 1776.

Island, to the great joy of the loyal inhabitants of that place, who have all taken arms in favour of government. On the 14th, Lord Howe arrived, and on the 15th, the Phoenix and Greyhound men of war, passed up the North River, accompanied by many small armed vessels, with very little damage, and have effectually cut off all supplies from the upper country by water; that evening General Clinton, and the forces under his command, arrived from the southward; upon which General Howe determined to take possession of Amboy, and the 16th, the grenadiers and light infantry crossed the river in boats, about a mile above the town; the party of rebels, who were posted there, left it immediately on their approach, and General Clinton's army landed there from their transports that afternoon. Early the 17th, the whole army (except such a part as was thought necessary to be left for the defence of Staten Island) crossed over, and the whole marched in two columns by the roads leading to Brunswick and Woodbridge, the light infantry forming our advance guard, and the grenadiers our reserve. Part of the army that evening took possession of Woodbridge, and the remainder encamped on the heights, just at the back of that place, forming our line from one road to the other. On the 18th, the army was employed in throwing up redoubts, near the church and meeting-house, and making a horn-work to cover the causeway, leading to the blazing-star ferry, where our General posted two battalions of light infantry, to prevent our being flanked on our right, or being attacked in our rear by the causeway. He also posted two battalions of light infantry, Grant and Mackdonald's corps, and

the rest of the American volunteers, on different works we had thrown upon our left, to guard the road towards Brunswick, and three companies of Clinton's grenadiers in a redoubt on a hill, about three miles from Amboy, where we mounted six twelve pounders to scour the country between them and Raritan river; that afternoon our spies brought intelligence, that a large body of the enemy were on their march from Philadelphia; and the same evening some of our vessels returned to Staten Island, from New York Bay, and acquainted the General that a large body of the rebels, under General Putnam, had crossed Paroles [Paulus] Hook Ferry, in spite of our ships, who were kept from annoying them, by the strong southern winds; the 19th we received further accounts that a large body of the enemy were on their march from New Ark to form a junction with those coming from Philadelphia, and to attack us the next morning. Upon which we were drawn out in line of battle, and lay on our arms all night. Our right wing extended to the lower part of Woodbridge and our left to the Amboy road. General Clinton's army formed our second line, and the grenadiers who were posted on the high hill above the school-house formed our reserve. Our intelligence that evening was that the enemy had joined, and were within five miles of us, and the next morning we discovered them marching towards us in two columns, one by the Boundbrook road, and the other by that from Elizabeth-town. This last appeared the largest, but they halted about a mile from us and kept up a cannonade, which did little execution. We returned it with a few shots. In about half an hour our left was attacked briskly from



the woods on the Brunswick road; they met a reception from our light infantry which they did not like. At the same time the two columns advanced very quick to attack our first line, and part of their large column filed off towards the Church and Meeting-house, and began a running fire on our light infantry, but were so warmly received, that they soon retreated; the main body, not finding their attacks succeed, did not come near enough for us to do any execution with our small arms, though they must have suffered greatly from our artillery, which was very well served. The gentry from the Southward were greatly mauled, and did not maintain their ground long; but as soon as they gave way the rout became general, and our troops pursued them several miles, and took many prisoners. Immediately after the battle, the General ordered the light infantry of the whole army to march to the Blazing-star Ferry, and from thence to proceed to Bergen Town, to prevent any of the rebels from escaping to Powle's-hook, and to destroy the ferry boats on the rivers between that place and New-Ark. Tomorrow the army will march in pursuit of them; and I believe very few of Putnam's corps will ever join Washington's, as I think they will make the best of their way to their own homes. I am ordered to this place for some stores belonging to our regiment, and have hired a boat to carry this on board a victualler, which is to sail this evening to Sandy-hook, and perhaps it may reach you before the packet's letters, which will not sail with the General's dispatches till tomorrow.

*Extract of a letter from a gentleman who has escaped from the provincials at New-York, and joined the army under General Howe, dated Staten Island, August 17.<sup>1</sup>*

A few days ago I left our devoted city, where every means of defence has been concerted to secure it, and the whole Island of New York, from an attack of the royal army. Should Gen. Howe succeed in that enterprize, his antagonist, Mr. Washington, has provided a magazine of pitch, tar, and combustibles, to burn up the city, before he shall retreat from his present station; the numbers of his men are daily diminishing; they desert in large bodies, are sickly, filthy, divided and unruly; putrid disorders, the small pox in particular, have carried off great numbers; when I left the city there were six thousand in their hospitals, to which use they had converted King's College; they have not now quite 25,000 men in arms.

John Morin Scott is appointed Governor of New-York,<sup>2</sup> and Samuel Tucker, a cordwainer of Trenton, is exalted to that rank in New-Jersey.<sup>3</sup> The persecution of the loyalists continues unremitted: Donald M'Lean, Theophilus Hardenbrook, Young Futter the silversmith, and Rem Rappalge, have been cruelly rode on rails, a practice most painfully dangerous, and till now peculiar to the *humane* republicans of New-England. Mr. John Rappalge, of Brooklyn, Mr. James Coggeshall, have been seized on their way to join General Howe, with a quantity of sheep in their

<sup>1</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, Oct. 12, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> John Morin Scott was appointed chairman of the Committee of Safety to exercise all powers until the state government could be organized.

<sup>3</sup> Samuel Tucker was president of the Provincial Congress of New Jersey.

possession; however, the latter afterwards escaped, and found means to carry a number of fat weathers to the army. Mr. Washington commands at New-York; his town residence is at General Robertson's, on the Broadway, and his country seat is at Mr. De Lancey's house in Bowery.

Mr. John Foxcroft, Postmaster-general, Mr. Dashwood,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Smith Romage, Messrs. Hugh and Alexander Wallace, and Mr. Abraham Lott, the treasurer, are committed to gaol, having refused to take an oath of allegiance to the Congress; in short every one suspected of a hostile disposition to that body, are disarmed, and conducted into a damnable durance, which was the case of the venerable Chief Justice Horsmanden,<sup>2</sup> who at eighty was hurried into the country, by a party of ruffians, but he proved so troublesome on the journey that they chose to leave him on the road, without performing the injunctions of their demagogues.

Frequent have been the messages from General Howe to Mr. Washington, and Colonel Patterson has also been repeatedly in conference with the latter; but it seems Mr. Washington's ultimatum was, that he would harken to no proposition from the British commissioners. — The Phoenix and Rose men of war have passed up the North River, about 24 miles, where they were attacked by row-gallies and floating batteries, all which they either burnt or sunk, with a vast number of men; it was a dangerous service, and to the honour of Captain Hyde Parker, and Captain James Wallace most intrepidly performed; they are, just returned, having expended all their ammunition.

<sup>1</sup> Francis Dashwood.

<sup>2</sup> Daniel Horsmanden.

On my arrival in General Howe's camp, I found Mr. Cortland Skinner appointed Colonel, and Mr. John Morris, late of the 47th regiment, Lieutenant-Colonel of a corps consisting of 1500 loyal Americans, and Major Rogers, the famous partisan in the last war, Colonel of a corps of rangers. The Hessians arrived here on the 13th instant. The guards on their arrival, were ordered to land and refresh themselves after a tedious voyage, but they on the contrary desired to be led on directly to action, and their impatience was beyond expression when they were told of some indignities lately offered to the statue of their sovereign in New York.<sup>1</sup> I find the whole British army is now increased to between 24 and 25,000.

Some people lately arrived here from Philadelphia, tell us, that Mr. John Dickenson<sup>2</sup> is employed by the Congress in digesting a code of laws for the United States of America. We are informed that Mr. John Alsop,<sup>3</sup> one of the New-York delegates, had escaped from the Congress, and is on Long Island, on his way to join General Howe; Dr. Peter Middleton, Mr. Theophylact Baetie, Mr. Philip John Livingstone,

<sup>1</sup> The statue of George III, which had been erected on the Bowling Green, was dragged down and the gilt head of the King was carried to Fort Washington, where it was erected on a pole. Ebenezer Hazard wrote to General Gates on July 12, 1776, "His statue here has been pulled down to make musket ball of, so that his troops will probably have melted Majesty fired at them." Force, *American Archives*, 5th Ser., 1, 228.

<sup>2</sup> I have been unable to find any evidence to substantiate this report. John Dickinson, after refusing to sign the Declaration of Independence, enlisted in the colonial army and led his battalion against the British on their landing on Staten Island. He was not re-elected as delegate for Pennsylvania.

<sup>3</sup> John Alsop asked leave to resign his seat in Congress as delegate from New York after the Declaration of Independence, and his resignation was "cheerfully" accepted by the New York Convention.



sheriff of Dutchess County; Mr. John Watts, jun. recorder of New-York; Mr. Augustus Van Cortlandt, and Messrs. Robert and Samuel Auchmuty, are lately arrived in this Island, having narrowly escaped from their pursuers.

Lady Johnson is seized by order of General Schuyler, by way of reprisal for her husband's conduct, who has taken an active and loyal part, at the head of his faithful Mohawks; these have declared, that should the least injury be done to her, they would desolate and extirpate every person and property belonging to General Schuyler. A person just escaped from New-York informs us, that there is again a fresh hunt for the friends of government, who are called Tories; and that Mr. Augustus Van Horne, Mr. Vincent Pearce Ashfield, Capt. Harrad, Mr. John Roome, jun. Mr. John Stone Fairholme, and Capt. Turnbull, late of the Royal Americans, are made prisoners. Capt. Archibald Kennedy of the royal navy, is confined in Morris town, and Governor Franklin, accompanied by that merry heart David Matthews, Mayor of New York, now under sentence of death for eminent proofs of loyalty to his King and the old constitution, are removed into Connecticut Government, for the better security of their persons. — Early this morning a *Petiaugre*<sup>1</sup> with 16 of the Provincial soldiers, compleatly armed, arrived here; they found means to desert to us, and have each man received 3l. currency for their firelocks; the General has disposed of them on board the men of war to act as marines. Five guineas a man is given for recruits, who daily enter in great numbers. We are told by persons

<sup>1</sup> An open flat-bottomed schooner-rigged vessel.

escaped from Jersey, that Colonel Guy Johnson is arrived there from England; on the passage in the Halifax packet, a privateer engaged her, but after Capt. Boulderson had gallantly defended his ship three glasses, the Adventurer ended the contest by a retreat; on this occasion Dr. Constable received a wound, but is likely to do well.

It is now the Puritans high holiday season, and they enjoy it with rapture all over the continent; their behaviour exactly assimilates the manner of the King-killing tribe during the English grand rebellion; but perhaps they may soon find an alteration in their spirits from the execution of a plan for a general attack of the island of New-York, &c. for which preparations are now making. The whole army is on ship-board. Gen. Clinton, with the guards, highlanders, and some other troops, is to land and attack the enemy's posts on Long Island. Lord Cornwallis is on the point of departure, with a considerable detachment of troops, round Long Island, and to land at New Rochelle, near West Chester; and General Howe with the main body of the army to proceed up the North River, and make a descent in West Chester county, as nearly opposite as possible to the place where Lord Cornwallis may secure a landing. Should General Howe succeed in this arrangement, it will be difficult for Mr. Washington to move from the Island of New York; so that a general engagement may be expected. — — The following is a copy of General Howe's disposition, formed before the Hessians arrived.

The British army is divided into six brigades, four battalions of light infantry, four battalions of grenadiers, and two battalions of Frazier's Highlanders,

under Sir William Erskine. The whole to be in two lines and a reserve. First line, of four brigades, under the command of General Clinton. Second line, of two ditto, under the command of Earl Percy. The reserve, composed of all the grenadiers of the army, the 32d and 42d regiments, under the command of Earl Cornwallis, and Major General Vaughan.

Each brigade to consist of four battalions. First Brigade Gen. Robertson. — Second ditto, Gen. Pigot. — Third ditto, Gen. Jones. — 4th ditto, Gen. Grant. — 5th ditto, Brigadier Smith. — Sixth ditto, Brig. Agnew. — Light Infantry, Brig. Leslie.

The four battalions of grenadiers: 1st, Col. Monckton. — 2d Col. Meadows. — 3d, Major March. — 4th, the three Highland grenadier companies, by Major Stewart.

The four light infantry battalions by Majors Strauben-  
zee, Musgrave, Maitland, and Johnstone.

We are told that Mr. Washington's magazines are all in Cortlandt's Manor; to get possession of them must surely be an object of Gen. Howe's serious attention, and an additional inducement to attempt a landing in the rear of the Provincial forces.

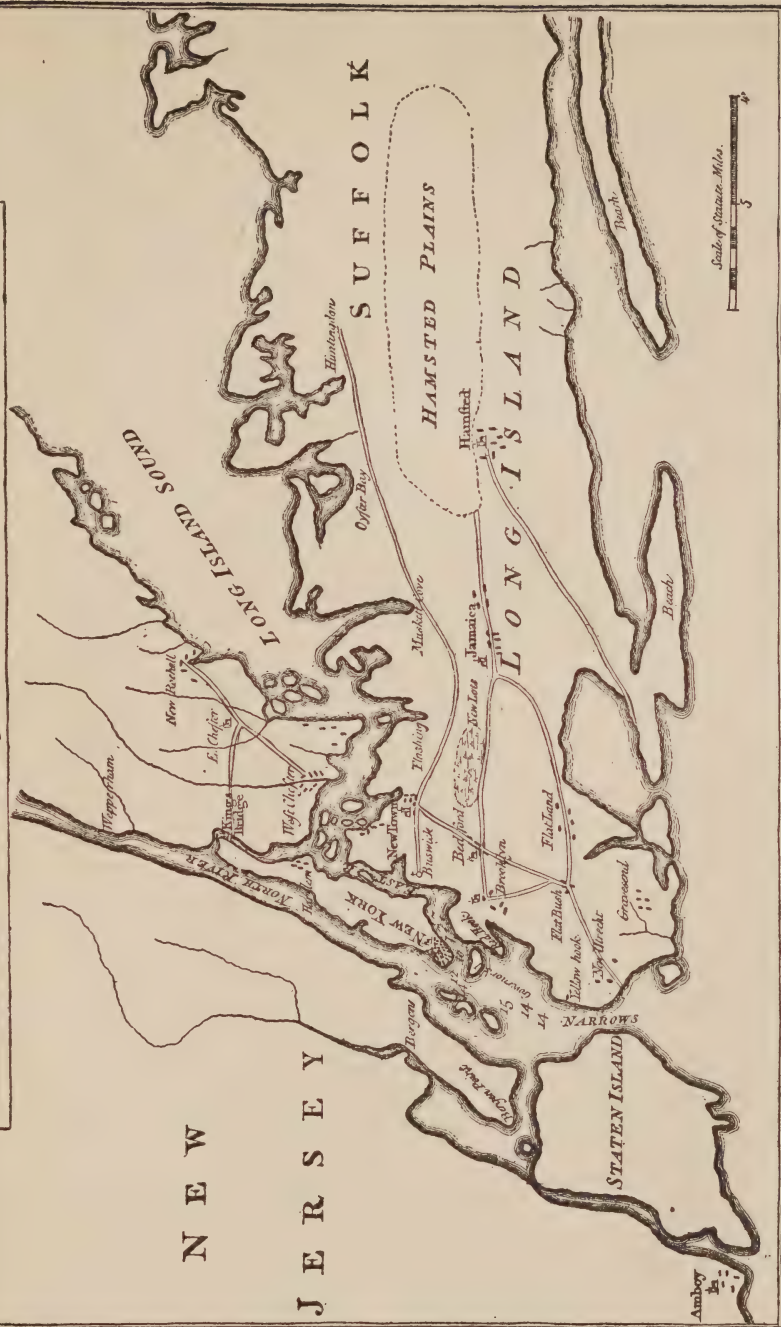
*Extract of a letter from a Field-Officer to his Lady in Gloucester, dated Camp on Long Island, September 1.*<sup>1</sup>

We have had a glorious day against the rebels. We landed on this island the 22d, and that day marched toward Brookland Ferry, opposite New-York, where this island is separated from the town by the East River, which is about three quarters of a mile over.

We took post within musket shot of their unfinished

<sup>1</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, Oct. 19, 1776.

Sketch of the COUNTRY Illustrating the late ENGAGEMENT in LONG ISLAND.







works. The troops were all on fire to force their lines, but Gen. Howe, in whose conduct the utmost prudence and vigilance have been united, would not permit it.

It was not till eight o'clock at night on the 26th that we received our orders to attack, and at eleven the whole army was in motion. The reserve, commanded by Lord Cornwallis, the first brigade of which our regiment makes a part, and the light infantry of the army, the whole under the command of General Clinton, marched by the right. The road to the right, after a march of about seven miles, brought us to an easy and undefended ascent of the hills, which we possessed at day-break, and continued our rout, gained the rear of the rebels; and while the Hessians and the rest of the army amused them in front and on the left, the grenadiers and light infantry attacked them in the rear; by this masterly manoeuvre the rebels were immediately thrown into general confusion, and behaved most shamefully. The numbers killed, wounded, and taken you will see in the Gazette. Some of the Hessians told me they had buried between 400 and 500 in one pit.

Such has been their panic that, on the 30th at night, they evacuated their redoubts and entrenchments, which they had retired to, on Brookland Heights, leaving us in possession of this Island, which entirely commands New-York. Had the works at Brookland been properly defended, our motions must have been retarded at least three weeks. For my part I think matters will soon be brought to an issue.

P. S. I have just heard there has been a most dread-

ful fray in the town of New-York. The New-Englanders insisted upon setting the town on fire, and retreating. This was opposed by the New-Yorkers, who were joined by the Pennsylvanians, and a battle has been the consequence in which many have lost their lives.<sup>1</sup> — By the steps the General is taking, I imagine he will effectually cut off their retreat at King's Bridge, by which the island of New-York is joined to the continent.

*Letter from Joseph Cheesman, master of his Majesty's ship Galatea, dated New-York, September 18, 1776, to Mr. John Jenkins sail-maker in St. Catherine's. — Received with the post-mark of Bristol, ship letter October 24.<sup>2</sup>*

I have now the pleasure to acquaint you, that New York was taken by his Majesty's forces under the command of Lord Howe the 15th instant, at about two o'clock in the afternoon. There was a very smart firing between our ships and the enemy's fort in passing the town; when our army landed under cover of the ships, and the enemy made a very precipitate retreat. On Monday the 16th an engagement ensued, which ended in a total defeat of the rebel army; 8000 killed and taken prisoners, among whom is the famous Carpenter Putnam; Gen. Washington lost an arm, and narrowly escaped being taken prisoner. The loss of King's troops is about 1500.

<sup>1</sup> The question as to what should be done in case the evacuation of the city became necessary was much discussed. General Nathanael Greene was in favor of destroying the city in order to prevent its becoming headquarters for the British army. John Jay also favoured this course. Washington had, however, referred the matter to Congress and it advised that no damage be done.

<sup>2</sup> *Farley's Bristol Journal*, Nov. 2, 1776.

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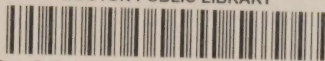








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